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The Shape of Things

NEITHER LABOR NOR THE FARMER SEEMS to have cause for alarm in the Supreme Court's decision in the Chicago milk case. In our opinion it does not weaken proper exemption of trade-union and farm-cooperative activities from the anti-trust laws or undermine proper attempts at regulation of the milk industry. The court held that milk producers and distributors engaged in a price-fixing combination could not evade anti-trust prosecution by appealing to the Agricultural Marketing Act, since that law permits price-fixing only under government supervision and regulation. Had the court held otherwise, it would have left the dairy farmer and the consumer completely at the mercy of the milk trust. The decision also seems to imply that neither labor unions nor farm cooperatives can plead exemption from the anti-trust laws when they engage in monopolistic combinations with employer and distributor organizations. To have decided otherwise would have been to uphold a kind of racketeering. But this decision does not mean that the anti-trust laws can be used to police any and all labor-union and farm-cooperative activities. Attorney General Murphy in his letter to William Green says they can be applied "to the activities of labor organizations and their members." The question is, "What activities?" Murphy is less cautious than Thurman Arnold, but both seem to be looking back to the anti-trust-law interpretations of the court under Taft.

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THE SUPREME COURT HAS ALREADY TURNED its back on the ideas of the Taft era, and nowhere more strikingly than in the field of labor. One of Justice Brandeis's last decisions identified the right to picket with the right of free expression, and was in sharp contrast to the weasel reasoning of the decisions to which the Department of Justice now appeals. We think the Supreme Court will uphold the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in its unanimous decision setting aside the $700,000 triple-damage verdict against the Apex sitdown strikers in a suit brought under the anti-trust laws. Judge John Biggs, Jr., condemned the sitdown strike but declared that the commission of unlawful acts by the strikers did not make them guilty of a combination in restraint of interstate commerce—"their intent was to unionize the appellee's plant, an action local in motive and in effect." Remedy for the sitdown strike, the court declared, lies in the criminal laws of the state. Thurman Arnold says he agrees with the decision. But if the court is unwilling to apply the anti-trust laws to the sitdown strike, is it likely to do so in the obscurer and more controversial cases with which he is concerned? The Apex decision, in effect, upholds *The Nation's* contention that the anti-trust laws were not meant to be a means of policing labor but of policing industry. In that connection the ruling will be bad news for Tom Girdler, who has pending a similar suit for $7,500,000 against the C. I. O. The steel industry provides our outstanding example of evasion of the anti-trust laws. When a steel magnate accuses labor of violating the anti-trust laws by trying to unionize his men, he may be suspected of possessing a sense of humor.

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OHIO'S INDUSTRIES ARE BOOMING, BUT Ohio's cities are experiencing a financial crisis which has caused thousands on relief to be cut from the rolls and the meager rations of other families to be still further reduced. In Cleveland a quarter of those on relief, mostly single adults, have been dropped from the food lists altogether and are being kept from starvation only by supplies issued through the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation. The scale on which assistance is available to families is indicated by the allowance of $17.10 for two weeks to a woman with eight children. Nor is it certain that such payments can continue to the end of the year unless additional funds are raised. The rushing of WPA jobs for 6,000 will, however, do something to reduce want. In Dayton and Toledo, hospitals report numerous cases of malnutrition. In Toledo the schools are shut, and only the very old, the sick, and children are receiving food allowances. Ohio cities are continually running into troubles of this kind because the legislature has steadily refused either to make an adequate state contribution to relief or to permit the levying of additional local taxes. Mayor Burton of Cleveland, a Republican, has been urging Governor Bricker to call a special session. But Governor Bricker has Presidential ambitions, and his chief claim to the attention of his party is the fact that he has balanced the state budget. To deal with the relief crisis would necessitate sullying this record; so the Governor is sitting tight and telling the cities that their extravagance is to blame. Playing politics with misery in this way may endear Mr. Bricker to the G. O. P. It will hardly make the same impression on ordinary voters.

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IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, A COURAGEOUS liberal is on trial. The prosecution of Mayor Maury Maverick is a transparent political maneuver; not even his critics deny the political animus behind the accusations. The most serious charge—that he paid the poll tax of voters in the last city election—has been dropped; he now faces the more vapory charge that he "conspired" with others who committed that offense. Even if the charge were valid—and it remains to be established—it would come with ill grace from any Southern politician, for the procedure is routine in Southern elections. There is serious question, moreover, of the constitutionality of the poll tax itself, which is a flagrant hang-over from an undemocratic past. The significant fact is that Maverick is an independent liberal, a left New Dealer in John Garner country. When the Garnerites prevented his reelection to Congress, they thought they had written finis to his career. They were wrong. Now he looms as a menace to a Garner-controlled Texas delegation at the Democratic convention and as a perpetual nuisance to the state's reactionary overlords. This trial is designed to accomplish his political burial. Whatever its outcome, we suspect that he won't bury easily.

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A RENEWED FLOOD OF PROPAGANDA MAY be expected against Mexico, now that its Supreme Court has upheld the expropriation of foreign oil companies. About 60 per cent of Mexico's oil production was controlled by the Anglo-Dutch international oil trust, and another 30 per cent by the Rockefeller companies. They would doubtless not be unwilling to see American lives and money spent to establish a new Mexican regime more to their liking. The Mexican court's decision is based on the 1917 constitution, which vested ownership of the subsoil wealth in the nation, this provision being patterned after an older Spanish law that subsoil wealth was the property of the sovereign. Under the decision the companies have a right to compensation for "capital directly and legitimately invested in the oil industry on Mexican soil" but not for profits they would have made in the future if there had been no expropriation. We think the method and time of payment a legitimate subject for State Department negotiation, but to go beyond this would be to revive "dollar diplomacy." Even expropriation without compensation is not unprecedented in law, as one Mexican judge pointed out, citing the abolition of slavery in the South and prohibition as examples. The first is a telling parallel, for just as the Northern merchant and capitalist chafed under the power exercised in the government by the slaveholding planters, so the Mexican people have long resented the interference and power of the oil interests in their government and economy. The difference is that Mexico offers compensation, although the wealth the oil companies have taken out of the country is many times greater than their investment.

PREMIER DALADIER WON A RENEWAL OF HIS decree powers and a vote of confidence in the first session of the Chamber of Deputies to be held since the war began. A considerable minority, mainly composed of Socialists, voted against him, and during a stormy debate many members declared that they would join the opposition save for the fact that they wished to avoid a government crisis. Daladier did, in fact, threaten to resign if thwarted, but in the end made a slight concession by promising to submit each decree for approval within one month if Parliament were in session. Since his powers make it unnecessary to call Parliament more than once or twice a year, this is a very faint gesture toward democratic control. With all the Communists expelled, there was no opposition to Daladier's broad war policy. The grounds for complaint were rather that Parliament was being ignored instead of permitted to exercise a general supervision over the government. No doubt many of the deputies were irked by comparisons with the British House of Commons, which has been meeting regularly since the war and engaging in pungent criticism of the government. So far from hampering the administration, this parliamentary freedom appears to be a positive force in exposing inefficiency and creating a direct link between public opinion and the Cabinet. Above all it is serving as an aid to the maintenance of those basic civil liberties which are usually the first victims of war. Britons, of course, have had to surrender temporarily many rights, but every demand in this direction is subject to sharp scrutiny in Parliament, and not long ago the Home Secretary was compelled to withdraw a whole set of regulations which the House considered gave him unduly wide and ill-defined powers of prosecution and detention.

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THE VIOLENCE UNLEASHED IN CHICAGO against striking Hearst newspapermen recalls the Al Capone era. A fine sense of professional "ethics" has kept stories of the attacks out of the press in Chicago as elsewhere, even the supposedly liberal Chicago *Times* remaining silent on the gangsterism. But the latest issue of the *Guild Reporter*, organ of the Newspaper Guild, lists eighteen cases of assault by so called "goon squads" and also reports that thugs shot at strikers manning a sound truck and slugged the crew of another after attempting to overturn it. The attacks began on November 18 when frail Harry Read, strike-unit chairman, whom Hearst once called "my best city editor," was set upon by a gang of six and knocked down. Read is head of the Chicago Cathedral Chapter, Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, and was distributing leaflets for the Holy Name Cathedral Labor School when he was attacked. Mayor Kelly's police seem to be showing a positive genius for not being present when the "goons" are at work. Only one of the thugs has been arrested, and a municipal judge let him off with a one-dollar fine.

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WAGE DIFFERENTIALS BASED ON RACIAL discrimination exploit the labor of the Negro worker and undermine the bargaining power of the white. The decision rendered by Federal Judge W. Calvin Chestnut in Baltimore requiring the payment of the same salaries to Negro school teachers as to white is a victory in the fight for wage equality. It will also aid in the establishment of greater educational equality for Negroes in the South. The Maryland Teachers' Association and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People deserve great credit for the fight they waged to win the Chestnut decision. What has happened in Maryland should set an example in the North as well as the South, for wage inequalities based on race exist above the Mason and Dixon Line as well as below it.

"By Fire and Sword"

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

THE "ideology" behind the Russian invasion of Finland is summed up with beautiful brevity in the words of a Stakhanovite worker at a meeting in a Moscow factory, reported by G. E. R. Gedye in the New York *Times* just before the invasion. "We will punch them so hard in the teeth that not one gentleman ruling Finland will be able to gather them together again. Long live the peace policy of the Soviet government!" The teeth were symbolic. In military terms they were quickly translated into the bodies of civilians smashed to fragments in buses or on the streets of undefended towns by bombs dropped from Soviet war planes. The horrors that fascism wreaked in Spain are being repeated, in the name of peace and socialism, in Finland. And the contemptible pretenses that have accompanied fascist aggression—pretenses brilliantly exposed and excoriated by Litvinov in his unforgotten speeches at Geneva—are now being revived by the government that dismissed him in forms so brazen and bizarre as to seem almost like caricatures of their fascist models.

After the conclusion of the Nazi-Soviet pact, Louis Fischer wrote in *The Nation:* "The pendulum of the Kremlin clock swings fast and never stops halfway." This week it has swung all the way over to the right.

What are the reasons for the Russian invasion of Finland? Let us ignore the shocking nonsense in the Soviet press and look only at the facts. Russia demanded certain islands in the Gulf of Finland; a naval base at Hangö, Finland's chief fortification; the port of Petsamo close to the nickel mines owned by the International Nickel Company, Finland's one outlet on the Arctic Ocean; a piece of territory near Leningrad on the Karelian Isthmus; the demilitarization of the frontier. In return Finland was offered a strip of Karelia, larger in area than the territory Russia demanded, but of no particular value. Long negotiations in the Kremlin failed to produce an agreement. Finland's representatives announced that they had accepted a majority of the Russian demands but could not go the whole way without sacrificing the country's independence. They went home, leaving the door behind them open for further talks. But the country was put on a war footing in case of trouble. Soviet and Finnish troops faced each other across the frontier. Tension mounted, and the Soviet press launched a systematic campaign designed to terrorize the Finns into surrender. Out of the mass of abuse and lies the one point consistently made was the present vulnerability of Leningrad and Russia's need of controlling the approaches to the city both overland and through the Gulf of Finland. This point is valid if Russia is preparing to meet an attack from Germany or from Britain in alliance with Germany. While neither looks probable for the duration of the present war, the Soviet government is obviously determined to utilize the freedom from interference which the war provides, to guard against the hazards of a longer future.

Without invasion the Soviet Union could have obtained the boundary concessions and the islands in the Gulf of Finland it has now taken by force. The one thing it certainly could not have gained is the fortified Hangö peninsula; if Finland had granted this it would have been as if England allowed a Continental power to establish a naval base at Plymouth. Rather than relinquish any part of its demands, the Russian government preferred a war of conquest. How long ago it decided on this no one knows, but certainly the policy was laid down before the British-French negotiations began last summer. The terms of that undefined Russian demand for concessions in the Baltic states, made during the negotiations, are now revealed in the bombs dropping in the streets of Helsinki. When the demand was rejected, Stalin turned to Germany, and his advance in the Baltic may well have been part of the deal that preceded the division of Poland.

Since I am not in the power-politics business, it is hard for me to understand the necessity of pretense. If Russia was determined to enforce its claims upon Finland, even by bomb or bayonet, why could it not have issued a direct plea of national necessity such as I have outlined here? Bad as its case might seem to sticklers for peaceful methods, it would be better than the palpable, barefaced lies with which the Soviet government draped its cold-blooded purpose. Does any living man believe that Finland intended to attack the Soviet Union, much less to extend its domination to the Ural Mountains? Does anyone believe that Finland was encouraged to resist Soviet demands by British "imperialists and warmongers" when

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Britain even today is officially ignoring Russia's aggression in the interests of friendly relations with the Soviet Union? Does anyone really believe that the new "democratic" regime set up at Terijoki by the advancing Russian army represents the interests or desires of the Finnish workers and peasants? What is this grotesque nonsense designed to accomplish? One can only suppose that it is aimed at people who read and hear nothing to the contrary—at the people of the Soviet Union. But a war is not an internal affair, and opinion in other countries will have much to do with the final outcome of Moscow's adventure in imperialism. The Kremlin obviously needs a censor.

For no conqueror ever had a worse press than Stalin has today. Even the Nazis are finding their own invention-machinery requirements inadequate to the demands of the newest exploits of their partner. Forced to think up reasons for approving a development that holds obvious threats to German interests, the Nazi press has belatedly decided to blame the whole affair on Britain. The *Völkischer Beobachter* argues that the Russian-Finnish dispute proves that peace will not descend upon Europe until its quarrels are left to those "immediately concerned." "The experiences of the present war prove," it says, "that collective security is ineffective in protecting the strong from the weak. . . ." I think that this comment should be preserved as fascism's happiest contribution to the literature of international relations.

Italy makes no pretense of approving Russia's attack. Mass student demonstrations in support of Finland have been permitted, with the police ostentatiously guarding the Soviet embassy from assault, and the press has expressed cautious sympathy for the Finns. The Italian attitude has elements of irony considering Mussolini's record, but it proves how intense are Italy's fears of Soviet advance in the Balkans and reflects an antagonism to Nazi policy which is now almost outspoken.

In the rest of the world, abhorrence of Soviet imperialism is expressed as clearly as fear and national self-interest permit. China, depending still on Russian supplies, is silent; Japan, worried about its own security and glad enough to have Soviet attention directed to the west, says nothing officially, but its press warmly supports Finland's case. The Balkan states, especially Rumania, watch with obvious trepidation, reading their own fate in the progress of the struggle. In the Scandinavian countries, of course, popular indignation against Russia runs hot, and hundreds of young men are offering their services to the Finnish army. The governments expect ultimate involvement. The possibility that Russian troops may push through to the Atlantic is in every mind, and the even more desperate fear of a joint German-Soviet attack on the peninsula and Denmark, which might develop either as the result of a prearranged deal or as a counter-move by Hitler to prevent Russian domination of Scandinavia. Sweden has formed a new emergency Cabinet.

As for the United States, opinion is divided only as to the form and appropriate degree of protest. The President offered the good offices of the United States government in an effort, which he doubtless knew would be vain, to prevent the invasion. He has followed it with two official acts: a message to both governments urging that they refrain from bombing civilian centers—a proposal which Finland agreed to and Russia ignored; and a public request that American firms refuse to sell planes to the aggressor, unnamed but clearly designated. Much pressure is being brought to bear to force the Administration to break diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, but only part of it can be traced to righteous indignation. The rest is partisan politics which has driven a few Republicans to the perilous length of attributing the invasion of Finland to the Administration's recognition of the Soviet government in 1933. The President's course seems to me beyond criticism. I hope and believe he will not go farther and end diplomatic relations.

So far Finland has resisted the Russian attack with amazing vigor. The government has been reorganized to draw in representatives of all parties, including Vaino A. Tanner, Social Democrat, former Finance Minister, and head of Finland's greatest cooperative society. The new Cabinet's offer of peace negotiations has of course been flatly rejected. After all, Moscow has already set up, recognized, and signed a mutual-assistance pact with a Finnish "government" of its own—a government which has gracefully yielded all that the legally constituted government at Helsinki refused. It would be improper, to say the least, to ignore the existence of so amenable a puppet and negotiate with the government it is supposed to have superseded! On similar grounds Moscow has refused to attend the meeting of the League Council, called at Finland's request. Aside from such mummery, it is clear that Russia is now determined to have its way with Finland, to smash its military power and achieve domination of the Baltic.

The Finns are fighting for their lives and for the independence of their country. And whether they are conscious of it or not, they are fighting to resist a concept of revolution that threatens every ideal that the working-class movement has stood for. Only a few weeks ago *Izvestia* pointed out that you cannot change an ideology "by fire and sword," a simple fact that all honest revolutionary leaders accept. Today the followers of Stalin all over the world are repeating in other words the formula of the Moscow factory worker. Whether or not that formula will prevail in the Balkan states and even in the strong democracies of Scandinavia may well be settled among the lakes and forests of Finland.

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Mr. Dies in Manhattan

MARTIN DIES'S campaign for renewal of his committee's appropriation opened at Madison Square Garden last week. The event, camouflaged as a "Committee for America mass-meeting," was a box-office dud —nearly half the 12,000 spectators were admitted free— and as theater second-rate. But the production was crammed with social significance. It dispelled any lingering illusion that Martin Dies can be educated to distinguish between liberals—including the New Deal variety —and Communists. It unveiled his newest and least reputable associates, the records of some of whom could keep a Congressional inquiry busy for months. And it put on display a fascist-minded upper class which draped itself in its furs and took over the more expensive seats.

As demagogic art the performance had one serious flaw: it lacked even pseudo-radical overtones. The crowd in the balconies, where the proletariat—including a generous sprinkling of Christian Fronters—was admitted free, remained relatively apathetic, as if waiting for a main bout that never came. But to the uniformed legionnaires, to the Daughters of the American Revolution, to the Park Avenue contingent, and to the visible bloc of reactionary Catholics recruited by George U. Harvey, the evening was a memorable one. It was a legionnaire's dream of a Town Hall forum: the speakers, representing every reactionary walk of life, included Jeremiah Cross, head of the state Legion, who swore that New York wasn't big enough to hold both J. Cross and Simon Gerson; Joseph P. Ryan, who gave an unconvincing portrayal of a trade-union leader; Laurens Hamilton, a Son of the American Revolution and son-in-law of J. P. Morgan; Brigadier General John F. O'Ryan, whose comments were unfortunately inaudible; Borough President Harvey of Queens, who slyly observed that "it's a damn good thing Yale isn't in Queens County"; and Jean Mathias, commander of the Jewish War Veterans, apparently put on the roster to quell any rumors of anti-Semitism. In rapid succession the speakers berated communism (and fascism), the C. I. O., foreign agents, and class consciousness, scolded Mayor LaGuardia and Frances Perkins, and leveled parenthetical thrusts at the White House. They were unanimously "for free speech but—."

Dies arrived at exactly 8:30. He was greeted by a uniformed "honor guard" of the Seventh Regiment, despite a state law prohibiting the appearance of the National Guard at political gatherings, and by four spiritless creatures portraying the Spirit of '76. He was introduced by Merwin K. Hart, who stopped fighting against social legislation a few years ago to fight—rhetorically—for General Franco. Hart visited Franco's Spain as the Generalissimo's guest, was chairman of the American Friends of Nationalist Spain, and throughout the war served as Franco's foremost American propagandist. His office served as the headquarters for the hastily fabricated "Committee for America."

Dies's speech, broadcast over a national hookup, was a blend of caution and candor. Departing from his prepared text, he omitted his most specific thrust at the New Deal. But without mentioning names he made himself abundantly clear; and his words ought to be memorized by those New Dealers who have recently decided to throw the Communists to Dies in the hope that his appetite will thereby be satisfied. For the bulk of Dies's tirade was aimed at neither Communists nor fascists but at "Marxists" who "masquerade as liberals." The only "Marxist" he specifically identified was Thurman Arnold. And the way to tell a "Marxist," he explained, is by his espousal of these heresies: (1) "the attack on our economic system"; (2) "the notion that the government has the duty to support the people"; (3) "subtle proposals to regiment agriculture and industry."

On the platform, beaming gratefully at Mr. Dies, was a coterie of celebrated citizens: State Senator McNaboe, Mrs. Ralph Easley, and one Ralph Appleton, who until recently provided free office space for the Christian Mobilizers. Less enthusiastic was Frederick Jagel of the "Met," who was drafted to sing the Star-Spangled Banner. Mr. Jagel, his press agent hastened to point out, hates the Star-Spangled Banner and wants a new national anthem, but he sang it anyway out of deference to Dies and majority rule.

When the meeting ended, a society matron nearly knocked Dies off the platform by pounding him affectionately on the back. The Christian Fronters went noisily into the streets shouting "Investigate Zionism." On the whole the meeting revealed more about un-American activities than its sponsors intended. It gave dramatic evidence that a little government money has already gone a long way.

That American Standard of Living

ACCURATE information on America's much-vaunted standard of living is available for the first time in a booklet entitled "Consumer Expenditures in the United States," issued by the National Resources Committee. Here in cold statistics we have a picture of what American families of different income levels spend their money for. The picture bears little resemblance to that usually drawn of the mode of life in the richest country in the world. It is even farther removed from the life of the average American family as presented by Hollywood.

We find that the typical American family—the statistical median—had an income of $1,160 in the year 1935-36, when the study was made. This was not a

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median wage, but the median family income. In the typical family of four the equivalent of one and one-third employed persons was required to bring in this amount. Median expenditures were a little higher, since the average family could not make ends meet on $22.50 a week. The typical American family spent approximately $1,195 during the year. Of this sum about $459, or 38 per cent, went for food; $393, or 33 per cent, went for housing, household furnishings, and operation; and $106, or 9 per cent, was spent for clothing. Thus 80 per cent of the typical American family's income was spent for the bare necessities of food, clothing, and shelter. An additional 10 per cent went for such essentials as transportation and personal care, leaving roughly $120 for the family to spend on such "luxuries" as medical care, recreation, tobacco, books, magazines, newspapers, radio, education, gifts, taxes, and incidentals. A fair estimate of the cost of adequate medical care per family, excluding dentistry and mental treatment, is $103 per family. The survey shows that the average family had just about half this amount available.

As we pass down the income scale, the situation becomes even worse. A third of American families and single individuals have incomes of less than $780, the average for this group being only $471 a year. At this level, five dollars out of every six is required to provide food, clothing, and shelter, and only 9 per cent is left over for the non-necessities listed above. Food alone takes forty-four cents out of every dollar.

Having observed that the largest item of expenditure in nearly every instance is food, we may fairly ask how adequate a diet these families obtained for this expenditure. For experience has shown that diet is as good a criterion of a family's living standard as can be found. People do not as a rule spend much for comforts and luxuries until their basic food requirements are met. While no national figures are available, we find that only one-fourth of the families surveyed in North Atlantic cities had a completely satisfactory diet, allowing a generous margin of safety. About 45 per cent had a satisfactory diet but no margin of safety, while 30 per cent fell short of the minimum requirements for health and efficiency. Forty per cent of the white and 60 per cent of the Negro families of the South were unable to spend enough on food to obtain an "adequate diet."

Another good criterion for judging living standards is the amount which a family is able to lay aside for a rainy day. It is here that we meet what is probably the most shocking disclosure of the study: far from being able to save a moderate amount, the two-thirds of America's families with incomes of less than $1,500 were, by and large, unable to live within their income. Families with incomes of less than $500 spent an average of $162, or almost 50 per cent, more than their earnings. Families in the median range spent about 3 per cent more than they earned. It is not to be supposed that every one of the nineteen million families with incomes of less than $1,500 incurred a deficit for the year. Actually, many of them managed to live within their incomes. But those who were forced to dig into their savings or who went into debt outnumbered those who could make ends meet.

Once a family is able to obtain the basic necessities and certain minor comforts and luxuries, the amount set aside in savings rises very rapidly. We find, for example, that families with incomes of between $4,000 and $5,000 often save 21 per cent of their earnings, while families in the bracket of $20,000 and up set aside half or more of their incomes. The latter are able to do this while spending five times as much for food and twenty times as much for clothing as the median family. Families in the upper bracket also spend sixteen times as much for medical care and thirty-six times as much for recreation as the typical family unit.

Other facts could be cited to fill in this picture—facts regarding housing and inadequate educational and recreational facilities—but enough have been given to illustrate how far the United States is from providing the essentials of life for its population.

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Editor and Publisher
FREDA KIRCHWEY

Managing Editor ROBERT BENDINER — *Literary Editor* MARGARET MARSHALL

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Hush-Hush on the Potomac

BY KENNETH G. CRAWFORD

Washington, December 4

ALL is so quiet along the Potomac that even a statement by John D. H. Hamilton is heavy enough to make a splash. Time was when Washington, as the seat of controversy between liberalism and reaction, was something of a news center, as important in its way as Helsinki. But that was before the war broke out. Since then Washington items, if any, have been trailers to the European news. Several thousand reliefers had to start starving in Cleveland to call attention to the fact that all the world's bereft are not in Europe.

The quiescence of the New Deal and its enemies during the last few weeks has not been accidental and not without ominous implications. It is the result of a deliberate policy of hush-hush and compromise on the part of the Administration and a growing disposition on the part of business to cooperate with government, especially if government does most of the cooperating. The President has soft-pedaled reform, borne down hard on the economy key, and achieved something approaching a close harmony with conservative Democrats, in which sour notes from the Republicans could be drowned out.

Apparently feeling that continuation of the domestic truce and concentration on foreign affairs will lay the smoothest pavement for Democratic success in 1940, the President is shooting for a short, non-controversial session of Congress. He must realize that this will entail enormous concessions to the tories. He seems to be ready to make them. Indeed, he has already started making them. The Budget Bureau, obviously acting under orders from the White House, is cutting deep into the estimates of New Deal agencies. At Warm Springs the President talked about holding the maximum relief load down to 2,100,000 cases. Patronage recommendations from such reactionaries as Senator Walter George of Georgia and Senator Josiah Bailey of North Carolina are receiving sympathetic consideration from government personnel officials—always sensitive barometers of Administration pressure. New Deal spenders, who want to supplement war business with public investments, are receiving no encouragement, and liberal advisers of the President are less in evidence at the White House.

All these things have of course happened before. There have been "breathing spells," cycles of "business appeasement," and periods of reconciliation by other names between the Administration and its enemies. But all of them have been more clatter than substance, and all have been short-lived. The weeks immediately preceding a session of Congress are invariably seasons of brave talk about drastic economy. The talk ordinarily dies out as soon as Congress reassembles. But this time the circumstances and the portents are different.

In a general way the President had a choice between two courses of action after his neutrality legislation was passed and his foreign policy determined. Course number one, urged upon him by a group of influential New Deal economists, called for resumption of heavy government spending for relief and public works. The theory behind it was that war trade, even under the liberal provisions of the neutrality law, would not be sufficient foundation for a healthy and lasting recovery. It would have to be bolstered by purchasing power fed by government pay rolls. Those who favored this course, among them Chairman Marriner S. Eccles of the Federal Reserve Board, advocated increased taxation to pay the bill. They particularly favored heavier taxes on medium incomes—the largest potential reservoir of additional revenue.

Marriner S. Eccles

Believing that the American people were willing to pay for the blessings of peace, these spending economists wanted to make the most of the opportunity afforded by the European war to increase taxes all along the line, feed the proceeds out through public-works channels, and at the same time close the gap between income and outgo. They argued that such a policy would carry the New Deal a logical step forward, put a firm base under the new prosperity, and strengthen this country's position as a neutral capable of preserving its neutrality. The war situation, they felt, could be made the justification for public-health undertakings, public works, and other socially valuable projects as well as for a bigger army and navy. They argued that spending for peace and preparedness was politically possible even in an election year; that it would, in fact, create an issue on which a liberal candidate could go to the country with confidence of success.

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It now seems clear that this course and these arguments have been rejected in favor of a more orthodox political stratagem—the trick of cutting the ground from under the opposition by adopting its slogans. The argument for the expediency of this line is that by next November the United States will be an island of peace in a world engulfed by war. Business, under the stimulus of war trade, will be reasonably prosperous if not booming. Comparing their good fortune with the plight of other peoples, American voters will be content with what they have. Republicans will have nothing more enticing to offer than something just as good. Even their promises to economize and to quit interfering with free enterprise will appear to be birds in the bush comparing unfavorably with birds already in hand. Voters, while enjoying the benefits of war trade, will be content to return to power the party that kept the United States out of war.

To make the most of this anticipated situation, the President must not excite the country about some new program, such as the taxers propose. He must keep attention focused on the foreign situation. Hence his desire for a do-nothing session of Congress. Although he announced at Warm Springs that he was considering the advisability of new taxes to put national defense on a pay-as-you-go basis, he soon made it plain that he would not insist upon this, that he had merely thrown out the suggestion as something the country should consider. After a subsequent visit to the White House, Chairman Pat Harrison of the Finance Committee expressed gratification at the increased yield of present revenue laws and assured the country that no general tax revision would be necessary at the next session. The White House then confirmed Harrison's analysis. There is nothing surer in politics than that Congress will avoid tax increases in an election year unless the Administration takes the initiative and puts up a strong fight for its legislation. So unless the White House does a flip-flop, there will be no new taxes in 1940.

Whatever is done to improve the budget picture will be on the spending side, and most of it will be done with mirrors. The President has announced that defense expenditures will be budgeted separately. The regular budget will show some Administrative reductions, but, in relation to total government outlays, these economies will be drops in the bucket. The drops will be important only to the agencies from which they are squeezed, and in some cases they will be life blood. The Wage and Hour Division of the Labor Department, already confronted with an impossible enforcement problem, can spare none of its meager appropriation. Reductions here will be tantamount to nullification of the law. And many other New Deal agencies are in much the same situation. The biggest savings will of course come out of relief and public works, and when cuts are put into effect here, the results may well be what they have been in Cleveland.

As usual Congress will pay little attention to the budget where it conflicts with politically expedient spending. The farm lobby almost certainly will shoulder the budget aside for some expensive legislation. Extension of the food-stamp plan and a certificate arrangement permitting restoration of processing taxes for the benefit of wheat and cotton are already being planned. Some of the Budget Bureau's agency cuts, particularly those affecting agriculture, likewise will be ignored by Congress. In the end there will be few if any savings left, but Congress, rather than the Administration, will have to accept the responsibility for extra-budgetary outlays. The reliefers and the unemployed, who have no organized lobbies to help them punch holes in the budget, will bear the brunt of whatever substantial economies there are. As has happened this year, five hundred will be thrown off relief every time fifty are rehired by private industry.

Bad as all this sounds, there is a liberal defense for the President's strategy. The Congress that comes back to Washington in January will be the reactionary Congress elected in 1938. On domestic issues it has been in the hands of the Republican-Southern Democratic coalition from the start. It jumped through the President's hoop at the special session only because the agenda was limited to foreign policy. For the President to push a tax-spend program at the coming session might be to invite defeat and loss of prestige on the eve of a national election. To demand adequate relief appropriations might be to butt a stone wall. A short, sweet session may head off the Barden amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act, which are still pending before the House Rules Committee and actively supported by a strong farm-business lobby, the A. F. of L. amendments to the Wagner Act, the Smith bill to throw certain civil liberties overboard, and a score of other less conspicuous but almost as dangerous measures left hanging at the close of the last regular session. Then there is the troublesome question of the statutory debt limit, which must be raised if the deficit for the next fiscal year is as large as usual.

Granting that these are valid reasons for caution, some Administration liberals still feel that the President should make a fight in this Congress for extension of the New Deal. Better go down fighting, they say, than wave the white flag. It is their contention that a defeated liberal program would make the best platform for the President or his chosen successor. It is possible that this argument will yet prevail. The New Deal has seemed dead before, only to come back to life. At the moment, however, Roosevelt's New Deal seems to have gone the way of Wilson's New Freedom, torpedoed by war abroad and reaction at home.

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Ideology and Pretense

BY REINHOLD NIEBUHR

IN ANALYZING the Russian or any other political situation a simple cynicism is no more illuminating than a simple moralism. To condone Russian politics of recent months on the ground that it is merely "power politics" in a world in which the power game is still being played and in which defensive necessities require participation in the game, counters the criticism of only those moral purists who are under the illusion that politics can be sublimated into an exercise of pure moral suasion. Everyone else knows that all political struggles are power-political struggles, in the sense that contending forces avail themselves not only of rational and moral arguments but of whatever social power they control.

The real issue does not lie in the use of power, but in the relation of national interests to the universal values which transcend a nation. Every national organism seeks to defend itself, and possibly to extend its power and prestige, in competition with other nations. Every nation claims that in doing this it is fighting not only for its own existence but for certain values which transcend its existence. This claim need not be wholly spurious. It cannot be wholly spurious, in fact, if it is to achieve any degree of plausibility. But the claim is always more unqualified than the facts warrant. Thus Germany claimed, until recently, that it was fighting not only for its own existence but to preserve the world from bolshevism. Britain and France claimed they were fighting for democracy, but that did not prevent them from scuttling the democratic cause in Spain. America was even more intent upon the defeat of fascism than were France or Russia; but we were prevented from going to war against a fascist nation by the fact that our vital interests were not imperiled by fascist aggression. Russia was at the center of the whole united-front movement against fascism until it appeared that the defensive requirements of the Russian state were better served by an alliance with, rather than against, Germany. These states are all in the same position—their devotion to the cause or interest which transcends their national interest is not so complete as they pretend it to be. No nation is ever true to the cause which transcends its national life if there is not some coincidence between the defensive necessities of that cause and the defensive requirements of the national organism. Every nation pretends, on the other hand, that its primary loyalty is to a universal value. This is the element of deceit which is involved in all national life, and in all human existence for that matter; for individuals, as well as nations, sanctify partial and particular interests by identifying them unduly with universal values. Why they should do this has never been adequately analyzed in Marxist theory, though Marxism undoubtedly made a tremendous contribution to the discovery of the fact.

Whether we judge this or that nation more or less severely for engaging in these pretenses depends upon our own ideological bias. Thus the same comrades who tore their hair over Chamberlain's disloyalty to democracy through his policy of appeasement are quite complacent toward Stalin's pact with Hitler, though the latter obviously freed Germany to make its attack on Poland and to plunge Europe into war. In domestic politics all of us, whether of the right or the left, are similarly influenced. If our cause is supported by Constitution and tradition, we claim that our primary concern is the preservation of constitutional government. If constitutional procedure favors the enemy, we convince ourselves that nothing is so important as to challenge tradition.

The recognition of this universal ideological taint in human affairs, including the inclination to be conscious of the foe's dishonesty but not of our own, does not, however, do full justice to the problem involved in Russia's recent volte-face. Russia is a slightly different case, being the national embodiment of an international movement which claims to have risen above nationalism and imperialism in politics and above "ideology" (in the exact sense of that word) in culture. It is the thesis of Marxism that rationalization of interest is a characteristic of bourgeois society but that a classless society is free of this dishonesty. It is the Marxist claim that nationalism is a product of capitalism and that the sentiment of nationality is transcended in the new society. Marxist doctrine affirms that the state is merely the instrument of class domination, that power and coercion are necessary only so long as the classless society is forced to contend against internal and external foes. When these are defeated the state will wither away.

The proof that these claims are taken seriously is given by the fact that thousands, if not millions, of the faithful outside the boundaries of Russia are completely devoted to its cause because they regard it not as a nation among other nations but as primarily a force of proletarian revolution in the world. Their devotion is so complete that their loyalty remains unshaken even when all the evidence points to the fact that the defensive, and possibly the imperialistic, requirements of the Russian state, rather than the strategic considerations of the workers' cause, determine Russian policy. They remain devoted even when

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Izvestia disavows the whole "ideological" battle line of yesterday and declares that like or dislike of fascism is a matter of taste.

The problem which this situation presents to the progressive and labor forces of the world cannot be dismissed by the cynical reminder that Russia is merely a nation like every other nation and like every other must play the game of power politics. If this is all that Russia is, it does not deserve the devotion of the nationals of other countries, and one can hardly blame other nations for seeking to destroy or to suppress the primary allegiance of some of its citizens to a "foreign state"; for this loyalty gives Russia an undue advantage in the game of power politics.

Obviously Russia is still in some measure loyal to a proletarian civilization which transcends its national existence. Yet it is bound to interpret this international cause in terms which practically identify it with Russian national interests. The question is whether this ambiguity of Russian politics will not become an increasing source of peril to the radical cause in other nations. Could anyone deny that the radical cause in France is greatly weakened and embarrassed at this moment in its fight against reactionary tendencies in France by the fact that the once vital Communist movement of that country stands under the indictment of owing primary allegiance to a foreign state the interests of which are not identical with either French national interests or French labor interests?

If this problem is probed to its full depth, it may appear that not only will the Stalinist interpretation of Marxism have to be challenged but the Marxist theory of ideology have to be reexamined. Whatever its great merits in uncovering the relation of economic interest to moral, legal, and cultural ideas and ideals, Marxist theory has become a source of moral and political confusion by attributing ideology to economic class interest alone, when as a matter of fact the ideological taint is a permanent factor of human culture on every level of advance.

The fact is that the most potent form of pretension arises at the very point in culture where the claim is made that all partial perspectives have been transcended, and where it is assumed that a political force in conflict with other forces is in fact a transcendental force, moving above the welter of interest and passion. Modern culture confronts in modern communism exactly the same problem that the Reformation and the Renaissance faced in Catholicism at the dawn of the modern age. The Catholic church claimed to be, not a particular religious, political, and cultural force imbedded in the feudal order and sanctifying particular political interests, but an absolute and transcendental force. It is because the claim of ultimate and absolute validity is always involved in religion that Marx rightly declared, "The beginning of all criticism is the criticism of religion." That truth must now be applied to Marxism itself in so far as it is not merely a political movement dealing with particular abuses but a religious movement claiming to have a solution for the ultimate problems of human existence. Catholics and Communists are both bound to resent this comparison. But that does not prove it to be untrue. Rival absolutists are not likely to recognize affinities in their conflicting ultimate claims, for they are too impressed by the difference in content to note the similarity in method.

The ideological taint, the dishonest pretension of universality, which accompanies every partial perspective in history does not mean that significant choices between rival political movements cannot be made; we are still capable of making them, though we are ourselves involved in rationalization and have no absolute and impartial perspective. If there were not some degree of freedom from interest in the human mind, there could be no culture at all, and all life would be no more than a conflict of interests. But our choices will be less confused if we know how to discount the latest ideology, which always presents itself in the guise of a final freedom from rationalization. It was important for Renaissance rationalists to discount the claim of a feudal civilization that it was a final form of civilization because it was "Christian." It was equally important for the Marxist to discover that the "objective" and "impartial" social scientists of the liberal-bourgeois period subtly insinuated bourgeois perspectives into their objective scientific conclusions. The contemporary task is to unmask the rationalizations of these same Marxists, who wrongly assume that the class organization of society is the sole source of ideological pretension. The pretensions of Russia must be judged as those of any other nation. Its transcendent disinterestedness in the field of world politics is an illusion. A proletarian civilization cannot be assumed to be good merely because it is proletarian. That a dictatorship which worships power for its own sake and another which rests upon the utopian illusion that all power can be eliminated from human life should reveal so many striking similarities is a perfect revelation of the moral and political confusion of our era.

The similarity between the dictatorships has now been extended to the field of propaganda. The Russians professed themselves imperiled by the aggression of the Finns, just as the Germans pictured themselves the long-suffering victims of Polish aggression, and acted accordingly. Thus Russia has graduated into the position of a completely modern state. Not only does it engage in the general rationalizations of which all nations avail themselves and which consist in interpreting facts from a particular national perspective, but it has learned the art of the tyrannical state, which so controls all organs of opinion that it can manufacture, rather than merely interpret, facts to suit its purposes.

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Creel's Crusade

BY I. F. STONE

THE least of the dangers facing us as the European war develops is the danger of taking thought. Those of us who supported repeal of the embargo on arms denied that it need be the first step toward intervention. The test of our sincerity will be our determination to impose no embargo on reflection.

Study of the career of George Creel may be recommended as an ice pack for the fervent. In "Words That Won the War," by James R. Mock and Cedric Larson,* the records left by Creel's Committee on Public Information are examined for the first time. Creel was Wilson's "propaganda minister," and "Words That Won the War" is a close-up of the greatest war-propaganda machine the world had ever seen. Creel himself was one of its victims. In 1916, in his "Wilson and the Issues," he termed the European war an imperialist struggle from which the United States should hold aloof. In 1920, in his "War, the World, and Wilson," Creel was still so strongly under the influence of his own propaganda that he bitterly attacked Keynes's "Economic Consequences of the Peace." "Had the Germans been stripped of every asset and subjected to vassalage for generations to come, still would the punishment have fallen far short of their monstrous crime."

In assessing and briefly summarizing the facts uncovered by Mock and Larson, I do not wish to imply that the present situation is entirely analogous to 1914-17. I cannot regard a choice between Hitlerism and Western capitalist democracy as "a matter of taste," or equate Hitler's Germany to the Kaiser's. But if a war to overthrow Kaiserism is followed within a generation by a war to overthrow Hitlerism it is because Franco-British imperialism by its very nature could not build a stable Europe in which a peaceful Germany would have its proper place. There are differences between this war and the last war. But there are also strong similarities, and these become stronger as one approaches the problem, not of the war, but of the peace to be made *after* Hitler. It is at this point, I think, that Creel's career becomes most instructive. It was he who set up the megaphones through which his master, Wilson, proclaimed that this was to be a war to end war, and both must be judged not by the Second Battle of the Marne but by the battle fought at Versailles. One learns from Creel's story that idealists are as necessary as brass bands in war time. One also learns that the idealists tend to suffer from the delusion that they are running the war, when it is the war that is running them. This becomes clearest when the victors meet to divide the spoils; eloquence and idealism then rate as highly as they do in other forms of poker. Creel's story warns of the organized mass idiocy that will become a necessity if we are again drawn into war, and of the difficulties liberals will encounter in trying to make a decent peace when it is over.

Creel started as an anti-imperialist and an isolationist. He was one of the young progressives who rallied to Wilson's defense in the "He Kept Us Out of War" campaign of 1916. In "Wilson and the Issues" he attributed the drive for our entrance into the war to American imperialism, and he saw the issue before the American people as "empire versus democracy . . . a decision between the decent, orderly development of our own resources, to the end that wretchedness, injustice, and ignorance shall be eliminated from the national life . . . a choice between the ideals of peace and the sordid shame of continual money wars."

Wilson was reelected in November and took us into war in April. Amos Pinchot wrote to George Creel, "Has Wilson changed? . . . Have we got to die tomorrow for principles that yesterday the President told us were wrong?" On April 12 the Secretaries of State, War, and the Navy sent the President a letter suggesting "some authoritative agency to assure the publication of all the vital facts of national defense." They recommended the creation of a Committee on Public Information and expressed the view that "the chairman should be a civilian, preferably some writer of proved courage, ability, and vision." On April 13 Wilson appointed Creel chairman. The appointment alarmed conservatives. The New York *Times* referred to Creel as "a radical writer." Creel was asked whether he was an I. W. W. and a Socialist. Just as business would have preferred a Hughes to a Wilson, so it would have preferred some right-wing writer to a Creel. But wisdom was dawning in some quarters. Grosvenor Clark of the Council of National Defense complained in August of the lack of enthusiasm for the war, and Roy W. Howard wrote, "This weakness must be remedied before the nation will go to war with its heart as well as its hands and feet." The upper classes were soon to find out that history had chosen more wisely than they. A Chamberlain would have left the American masses apathetic. It took an eloquent social reformer to create enthusiasm for the war.

The authors of "Words That Won the War" approach Creel's work as Wilson's propaganda chief in a friendly

* Princeton University Press. $3.75.

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spirit. As middle-of-the-roaders they are not particularly concerned with the areas of labor struggle and nonconformist opinion that provided the sharpest test of Creel's, and Wilson's, democratic principles. But the fact that the book is, if anything, weighted in Creel's favor only makes its evidence more appalling. It is the most important study of propaganda I have encountered, and this is a good time to read it, for, if I may venture a fourth-dimensional metaphor, it is slightly reminiscent in advance.

On page 184 of "Words That Won the War" there is reproduced a Committee on Public Information advertisement from the *History Teachers' Magazine* for September, 1917. The heading asks, "What Can History Teachers Do Now?" One of the suggestions is, "You can help people understand that failure in the past to make the world safe for democracy does not mean that it cannot be made safe in the future." To make sure that people understood, Creel ran a campaign that remains a press agent's dream, and some of our ablest public-relations counselors obtained their training in well-poisoning as Creel's assistants. The committee's news and feature releases filled more than 20,000 columns of newsprint a week. Its Advertising Division obtained more than $1,500,000 worth of space for layouts that ranged from "Bachelor of Atrocities" (for college papers: "Are you going to let the Prussian python strike at your Alma Mater, as it struck at the University of Louvain?") to "How Wear Ever [aluminum] Utensils Are Helping to Win the War." Its 75,000 Four-Minute Men gave short "informational" addresses in the nation's movie houses. It did an $852,000 business in war films. It marched the scholars into some of history's muddiest trenches. Stuart P. Sherman provided "American and Allied Ideals: An Appeal to Those Who Are Neither Hot nor Cold," and Carl Becker, "America's War Aims and Peace Program," for Creel's series of Red, White, and Blue pamphlets. Frederic Paxson, Edward Corwin, Charles Beard, and Sidney Fay were in Creel's battalions in this sector. For those who, like Harold Ickes, then head of the Illinois State Council of Defense, thought these pamphlets too highbrow Creel provided simpler messages: "The Hun—His Mark. Blot It Out with Liberty Bonds." Tin Pan Alley was also mustered into service, and a nation that had been singing "Yacki Hacki Wicki Wacki Woo" turned melodiously to the more patriotic "Hinky Dinky Parley Voo." It is an engaging period in the history of American culture.

Creel tried to keep the whirlwind under control, but the job was beyond any man. "The emotional climate," Mock and Larson point out, "in which Ora Buffington, a Pennsylvania attorney, urged the Committee on Public Information to import for public exhibition some of the Belgian children whose hands had been cut off was the very climate that Mr. Creel had to maintain for the support of President Wilson's most ennobling political ideals." Creel prided himself on not using his power for partisan purposes and repeatedly declared that the Committee on Public Information was "without the slightest authority to decide what constitutes seditious utterances or disloyal attitudes." But offenders could always be handed over to the secular arm of the Censorship Board set up under the Trading-with-the-Enemy Act, and Creel was also a member of that board. Inevitably employers confused profits with patriotism. While John R. Commons in a committee leaflet was explaining that "this is an American workingman's war" and Samuel Gompers, Hugh Frayne, and John P. Frey were doing their best to make workers think so, employers were using committee-inspired fervor to show labor "the necessity for rising above its technical rights." Labor's old friend, E. T. Weir, figures in this chapter. Creel admitted that "the fact that there are so many employers who put greed before patriotism makes it very difficult to level any blanket attack against workers who are likewise guilty of thinking of themselves before their country." He proposed a fight "against both kinds of slacker!" Nevertheless, E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company was pleased with the effect on its workers of the committee's patriotic posters. Here, too, the Muse was enlisted. Edgar A. Guest sang:

> Said the workman to the soldier: "I will back you to the last,
> No more strikes for higher wages till the danger time is passed."

Creel's greatest fight was his "fight for the mind of mankind." The committee flooded Europe with American propaganda. It provided funds for German Social Democrats in Switzerland, and it sent the Hungarian pacifist Rozika Schwimmer into the Dual Monarchy. It got results in Italy from the visit of Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt: "The press representatives were delighted with the frank statements of the Secretary." "In Spain as in every other country the two potent items of propaganda were military successes of the Allied arms and the idealism of Woodrow Wilson." But our allies had no intention of letting this idealism run away with them. The committee's agent in Spain reported, "Daily evidence is accumulating . . . that the British and French are trying in many ways to offset the growing influence of President Wilson . . . a member of the French embassy said to a prominent Spaniard yesterday, 'President Wilson may think he is going to be the arbiter of this war but he is fooling himself.' . . . The use of the word 'Yanqui,' which always appears in the material given out by the French office, is used with malice aforethought, for they know it is a term of opprobrium in Spain." The committee's agent in London reported, "There exists a large imperialist class here that is secretly hostile to all international ideals and regards our policies with the deepest hatred."

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The Creel committee sought to "sell" democratic idealism to the Bolsheviks as well as to the Tories. In addition to the agents Creel sent into Russia as "journalists," Wilson dispatched a commission made up of "Elihu Root . . . and other parasites . . . to acclaim the rising of the Russian nation. . . . To mask the capitalistic lot [*sic*] of the commission, serving as a lightning rod, were the leader of the American Labor Federation, James Duncan, and the 'prominent Socialist' Charles E. Russell." The description is from a copy of the Petrograd *Commune,* September, 1917, found in the committee's files. The committee circulated the Sisson "documents" proving that Lenin and Trotsky were German agents. (As every reader of the *Daily Worker* knows, only Trotsky was a German agent.) The committee's activities multiplied with the November revolution. On December 2 Creel cabled Sisson in Petrograd, "Drive ahead full speed regardless expense. Coordinate all American agencies in Petrograd and Moscow and start aggressive campaign. Use press, billboards, placards, and every possible medium to answer lies against America. Make plain our high motives and absolute devotion to democratic ideals. . . . Engage speakers and halls. . . . Cable if send motion pictures." In February, when the Germans were approaching Petrograd, Sisson had a "practical idea of greeting Germans if they ever arrive in Petrograd with bill-posted copies of the President's messages. . . . Bill posters keen for job." It would take an O. Henry to do justice to this episode in the committee's activities.

The Allies made sure that the words which won the war would not win the peace. In March, 1918, Creel complained that the British censorship was throwing his material out of the mails, and our minister in The Hague protested that Wilson's messages, "relayed through London, arrived so late or in such mutilated condition that the newspapers could not use them." M. Renault was finding the committee's films useful in his factories, but one of Creel's chief Paris aides warned against "the kickback." "Peace isn't very far off . . . after the military battle will follow the diplomatic battle . . . with the so-called 'practical' politicians and statesmen sneering at sun-kissed diplomacy." And in February, 1919, from the committee's office in Berne came gloomy but prophetic summaries of Swiss opinion. "It is almost certain so-called World War not last war. Without total revolution naive to believe shall see formed great family Europeans of London, Paris, Madrid, Rome, Vienna, Berlin, Petrograd. . . . Impression prevailing Wilson gave way to French-British imperialistic pressure. Germany driven desperation. . . . Hopeless Germany dangerous to European peace. Germany and Entente policies responsible for coming catastrophe by refusing listen Wilson."

Mock and Larson's book has been published just in time for that "coming catastrophe," and new Creels may be in the making.

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Trade as a Weapon

THE establishment of an Anglo-French committee to coordinate the economic effort of the Allies may not have the far-reaching post-war implications that some commentators have discerned. But it does mean "union now" for the purposes of the war, and by promoting common action in the fields of finance, industry, foreign trade, and shipping it should do much toward enabling the economic machinery of Britain and France to realize its enormous potentialities. From the point of view of our business men, however, it may not be an entirely happy development, since it will add greatly to the Allies' bargaining power and even make possible their competition in markets which Americans had hoped to occupy exclusively.

The primary objectives of the Allies' economic strategy are to exhaust the enemy and not to exhaust themselves. In order to attain the second of these ends they must do their best to hold export markets, not only to prevent the dissipation of their foreign reserves but also with a view to safeguarding their standards of living when peace returns. Hence one of the first tasks of the coordinating committee will be to assure a supply of raw materials to export industries and to work out methods of sales promotion in foreign countries. Naturally war industries will normally receive priority both in regard to labor and materials, but in some cases it may be considered more economical to maintain an industry capable of earning foreign exchange rather than an additional armaments factory. Thus it would certainly be wiser to keep the Paris dressmaking industry at work for the American market than to attempt to retrain its skilled employees as munition workers. The dollars they earn can, if necessary, be used to buy shells here.

The brief speculative boom in this country in early September was largely based on a belief that the Allies would be forced to rush into the market and buy goods regardless of cost. Thanks to reserves in hand they were able to follow a far more deliberate course which left many speculators stranded by a receding tide of prices. If the war is prolonged, opportunities for "soaking" the combatants may be multiplied. At present airplanes and machine tools are so urgently needed by the Allies that they cannot afford to haggle over terms, but in respect of most other American goods they can proceed cautiously.

This is particularly true of raw materials, owing to the vast resources of the British and French empires. *Commerce Reports* for November 25 states that the British Ministry of Supply has made long-term agreements to purchase 80 per cent of Canadian copper production and the entire output of lead and zinc. The price fixed for copper is believed to be between 10 and 11 cents per pound, which compares with current quotations in this country of 12½ cents. A similar contract has been made with the Rhodesian producers. In the case of other raw materials the policy of mass purchases from empire sources may put the British in a position not only to

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supply Allied needs on reasonable terms, but to exact a high price in this and other neutral countries. For instance, the British government has bought the entire West African cocoa crop for 1939-40, representing over 50 per cent of world shipments of this commodity. In reselling a part of this crop to America it could, if it wished, raise the price against consumers here. The British government is also able to influence, if not control, world prices of tin, rubber, and wool—all commodities of which we are large importers.

No doubt such powers will be exercised with diplomatic restraint, but it is noteworthy that the London *Economist* recently criticized the British authorities for endeavoring to keep down the price of tin and rubber. It pointed out that tin in New York had risen less than non-ferrous metals produced in America and argued that, even though a further increase would make the British government's own purchases more costly, it would be "worth while spending a few more pounds in order to gain a lot more dollars." Under normal circumstances the *Economist* would be the first to attack such a suggestion of monopoly exploitation. Its new and unnatural role as an advocate of "squeeze" thus serves as an indication of the importance attached by Britain to the maintenance of its dollar funds—an importance enhanced, of course, by the Neutrality Act's ban on all credit.

Apart from the question of price, British control of raw materials may cause temporary shortages. This seems to be happening in the case of the current Australian and New Zealand wool clip, which was taken over at the outbreak of war. It was understood that some part would be made available to Canada and the United States, but it appears from a recent debate in the House of Lords that merchants here are still waiting to know how much they can obtain and at what price.

In using trade as a defensive weapon the Allies may attempt to push prices upward in this and other markets if the traffic seems able to bear it. But trade can also be an offensive arm and may then be so wielded as to reduce prices. Germany's hopes of resisting the Allied blockade depend largely on its ability to extract from the Balkans the foods and raw materials they can supply. Unable to hinder this trade by force, the Allies must use their economic weapons. This involves both undercutting German prices and offering better terms for Balkan products. Already some successes seem to have been scored in this field, particularly in Rumania, where large quantities of oil and wheat have been bought up and kept out of German hands. Missions are now engaged in most of these countries endeavoring to negotiate agreements which will extend Allied trade while reducing supplies to the enemy.

It is possible that these arrangements may have an adverse effect on some American exports. Both Turkey and Bulgaria are large producers of tobacco and have frequently found it difficult to dispose of their crops, for which in recent years Germany has been the best customer. There are rumors that Britain is now prepared to accept large quantities, and should these prove correct, the present standstill in British purchases of American leaf may continue for the duration. Englishmen have long shown a strong preference for Virginia cigarettes, but if smoking Turkish will help win the war they will no doubt be nonchalant and light a Murad.

In the Wind

GENERAL GAMELIN, a foreign correspondent relates, was recently asked his opinion of Italy's military status. "If Italy remains neutral," he answered, "I shall need five divisions to watch it. If it joins Hitler, ten divisions will be needed to defeat it. And if it comes in on our side, I shall need fifteen divisions to rescue it."

A CONSCIENTIOUS objector appeared recently before a London tribunal and asked for exemption from war service. The judge asked him whether he had arrived at his conviction "by a process of reason," and rejected his plea when he answered "yes."

AT A PRIVATE, unreported meeting of F. D. R.'s Cabinet held recently, the future of the Communist Party was discussed. Participants agreed that the party's suppression was desirable but divided on the method. Some were for direct White House leadership of the move, while others urged that it originate "spontaneously" in Congress. The latter view won. Watch for fireworks in January.

OBSERVERS HAVE noted the reappearance in Washington of Toshi Go, South Manchurian Railway official, who did valuable "contact work" for the Japanese government on earlier critical occasions. This time he conferred with Senator Vandenberg and a number of other prominent legislators, and there are persistent reports that his missionary efforts have done a good deal to cool pro-embargo sentiment.

A PILOT OF one of the British planes which have been dropping leaflets on Germany returned to his base two days late. The company commander asked what had delayed him. "Nothing, sir," replied the aviator. "But the other planes in your squadron returned forty-eight hours ago, and they had dropped all their leaflets," the commander pointed out. "Dropped their leaflets!" exclaimed the aviator; "I put mine in the letter-boxes."

A GROUP OF leading bankers held a closed session recently and agreed that the United States was sure to stay out of the war for the next six months; after that anything might happen —and financial commitments should be made accordingly.

HENRY GORDON SELFRIDGE, the London merchant, arrived in Ripon, Wisconsin, his home town, recently. To reporters who questioned him about his "war aims," he said: "If Hitler and the Nazi regime were eliminated, Göring, a decent fellow, would probably take charge, remove the Nazi policies, and readjust Germany."

HEYWOOD BROUN'S last column in a Scripps-Howard newspaper will appear on December 14, when his contract expires. Roy Howard has made it plain that it won't be renewed—primarily because of Broun's Guild and labor activities. He is shifting to the *Post*.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Prague—a "Conducted Tour"

The Hague, November 16

LET me say at the outset that I was treated with great consideration and courtesy by the Nazi officials with whom I came in contact in Germany, especially those who permitted me to go to Prague, and that I am sincerely grateful for the tolerance and broadmindedness they displayed in granting entrance and freedom from censorship to one who has been 100 per cent opposed to all their doctrines. I admit that I wondered at times whether this was wholly tolerance or partly ignorance of the extent of my offending, or whether their attitude was due to an often-evidenced naivete and conceit which lead them to believe that it is only necessary to show the visitor what great things have been accomplished to convince him that the Nazi system is the best in the world. It was one of these confident officials who first suggested that I go to Prague to see for myself how happy the Czechs are now that the "rotten old government" of Masaryk and Benes has given way to the authoritarian efficiency of the Nazis. Naturally I wanted to go, especially as I was told, rightly or wrongly, that no other foreign journalist had been allowed in the protectorate since July except the few residing in Prague. It was Dr. Sallet, a Harvard Nazi in the Foreign Office, who obtained permission for me.

Unfortunately for the plan to convince me that the millennium had come for the Czechs, I chose the wrong day for my arrival. It was October 28, the anniversary of the founding of the republic, and the streets were full of people wearing its colors. From the news gatherer's point of view, I made the mistake of immediately driving up to the Burg and presenting my letter of introduction from the Foreign Office to Freiherr von Gregory, the propaganda chief of the protectorate. I should have spent the day on the streets. Freiherr von Gregory at once devoted himself to my welfare, taking me to lunch and giving me the opportunity to meet, in the absence of Baron von Neurath, the Protector, Dr. Karl Hammon Frank, the *Stellvertreter,* or as we should say the Vice-Protector. Dr. Frank is highly unpopular with the Czechs. He is obviously a man of great executive ability and ruthless determination, the type of man who will brook no opposition and if any arises will see that the extreme penalty is paid without loss of time. I believe that he has since been transferred to Poland, which will relieve the Czechs but will hardly bring happiness to the Poles. We had a frank exchange of opinion which he himself invited by asking about the attitude of the United States; I saw no reason why I should gloss over the American attitude of hostility, and he laughingly said he supposed that it was Nazis like himself who were to be eliminated. When the interview was over, he warmly shook my hand and thanked me for having been so frank.

Freiherr von Gregory was so devoted to me that except for an hour's call upon our consul general and a brief interval for dinner I was not allowed a moment to myself. It was the old familiar technique of the Russians—showing you just what they want you to see; in this case the motive was obvious—to keep me off the streets, the police having had to fire shots in the air even before noon to control the crowds. I was taken to tea with the Under Secretary of State, Dr. von Burgsdorff, a real, not a Sudeten German, and his charming wife and daughter. And in the evening I was foisted upon another young couple without being asked whether this would be agreeable to me, as I had not been consulted in regard to any other arrangements. Herr von Holleben, the secretary of von Neurath, was obviously an able young man, and his wife was an attractive woman, but the evening was not wholly a success. Naturally my hosts and others present did not like it when I told them that they were undertaking a hopeless experiment in trying to rule the Czechs and that the world was moving far beyond this sort of thing. It was a little hard also to be courteous to a young German diplomat who assured me that the demonstrations of the day had been puerile and stupid—he had stood on a street corner and asked the police if anybody had been shot, and they had told him no. As the grapevine system of communication which spreads all over Germany was already in touch with me, I knew that something serious had happened.

The next day indisputable proof came to me—under the very noses of my Nazi hosts—that three Czechs had been killed, twenty-seven seriously wounded, and many others slightly hurt, and that seventy had been arrested and would be given "exemplary punishment." The press was not allowed to say one word about the shootings. In this connection I must add that the worst German offenders are the newly uniformed Czech and Sudeten Nazis, who as in Austria immediately after the annexation are abusing their new authority and taking vengeance on their former opponents. I saw one boy in a brown shirt flourishing his revolver in a most needlessly provocative way.

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The Black Shirts have also developed an original technique. They shoot diagonally down at the sidewalk so that the bullets ricochet up into the crowd. Then they are "so sorry": "Did you not see that we deliberately fired at the sidewalk and not into the crowd?"

Freiherr von Gregory's kind attentions and those of his representative, Baron von Uexküll, did not stop there. The next morning I was called for and given a real treat. I was shown the beautiful old church of St. George and then was taken over the cathedral by the Bishop of Prague, by whom I was deeply impressed and with whom I had a most instructive talk. Then I was taken to the City Hall, where the Nazi Acting Mayor, the Czech Mayor being absent, and some eight members of the city government, together with my two barons-in-waiting, honored me with a delightful luncheon. There, alas, my good manners again forsook me. When I made my little speech of thanks in my best German, I was so wicked as to say that of course we Americans were deeply interested in Prague and that, as they knew, we had felt pretty unhappy about recent events, but at least we were all able to rejoice that so unique and rarely beautiful a city had been spared the horrors of war. I added that Masaryk had been greatly respected in America, and that Americans had looked upon the Czech Republic as at least a grandchild of our government. I also expressed my deep sympathy to the members of the city government because so much of their valuable trade with the United States had been stopped by the city's inclusion within the unfavorable tariff arrangements of Germany and the United States.

The German Vice-Mayor rose nobly to the emergency, but I cannot say that a "good time was had by all," though I know that some were not wholly unhappy. From that moment the kind attentions of Freiherr von Gregory came to an end. To save my soul I could not obtain the next day the privilege of thanking him in person for all he had done for me. At the Rathhaus luncheon when he asked if he or Baron von Uexküll could do anything more for me, I thanked him warmly but said that I must insist on a little free time to call upon my friends. I was assured that there was not the slightest intention of absorbing all my time, that I was quite free to go anywhere. It is worth recording here that while I was making my first call, the Gestapo arrived to inquire whether it was I who was calling and what we were talking about. Baron Uexküll gave me his word that neither he nor Freiherr von Gregory had had anything to do with this. Of course not, but it was rather a coincidence that the two barons-in-waiting were the only ones who knew that I was going to make calls that afternoon. That visit of the Gestapo put an end to further calls, because I naturally could not subject my friends to the unpleasant experience of having the dreaded Gestapo drop in on them, in addition to myself.

Well, I got anything but a pleasant impression of what is happening in the protectorate. The conquerors are using the old technique of imposing their will on their subjects by force, plus the new Nazi technique of going to work on the children to mold their minds: there are Black Shirts or Brown Shirts on duty in every secondary school, watching the teachers. The existing Czech government is a mere shell of a government, though it has 7,000 Czech troops still in service and certain delegated powers. I believe that as it is at that a very genuine annoyance to the conquerors it will be mustered out as soon as possible, whether in favor of outright annexation or something else I cannot say. The Protector is, of course, a veritable czar. He can upset the decisions of the law courts even when there are only Czechs involved; Germans can only be tried or sued before a German tribunal. The process of taking over all of Czech industry as well as agricultural production and distribution is going on rapidly.

If the large Czech newspapers that were in existence on March 15 are still undisturbed, they are of course completely censored. Thousands of Socialist, Communist, and other publications have perished. Even music is controlled, and nothing allowed which might arouse the "national passions" of the Czechs. The economic conditions are far better than in Germany. Food is plentiful and as yet but little regulated. Germans are rigidly excluded unless they come on business; otherwise there would be a tremendous inrush to purchase food at the cheaper Czech prices. All Jewish companies have been liquidated, and all Jewish officials of those companies eliminated in favor of carpet-bag Germans. In fact, the Jews are without work and are sitting about waiting to be robbed of everything they possess, except 3,000 marks, and shipped into Poland, probably to die of hunger.

This is what is left of Czechoslovakia. Where 3,500,000 Germans, or rather non-Slavs, were "emancipated," 7,800,000 Czechs are in mental and physical bondage, to be broken at the will of the conquerors. As long as there is any hope that the Allies may win the war, the Czechs will keep up the struggle. If that hope is taken from them, a long, long period of suffering, depression, and forceful amalgamation is before them. I do not know whether it is true that 70,000 Czechs have been arrested and confined in Germany, but I do know that this came to me from a source which should have the facts. This same source stated that the many thousands of Czech workers shipped into Germany, especially since the war began, are very well treated and are paid high wages in the fields and factories. Every effort is exerted to make them feel happy and to give them a good impression of Germany. Still, I believe that the effort to amalgamate the Czechs and make Germans out of them will be wrecked on the rocks of Czech courage and devotion to their ideals. As I took the liberty of saying to my hosts in Prague, "It is still true that oil and water will not mix."

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BOOKS and the ARTS

Avant-Garde: 1939

NEW DIRECTIONS IN PROSE AND POETRY: 1939. Edited by James Laughlin IV. New Directions, Norfolk, Conn. $3.

"NEW DIRECTIONS," an annual "volume of experimental and creative writing," edited by James Laughlin IV, enjoys the distinction of being the only sizable publication in this country expressly dedicated to *avant-garde* writing. Hence its value, unlike that of most anthologies, amounts to more than the sum of its contents. Carrying on in the spirit of the aesthetic magazines of the twenties, it has served for the past few years as the organ of those dissident and extremist strains that are constantly crowded out by the norms of taste. Moreover, "New Directions" has performed this highly important function at a time when craft research was shunned as a form of "escapism" and the little-magazine tradition was being destroyed by the highly publicized movement for a political art.

On the whole, "New Directions" displays the characteristics of its species—self-consciousness, esotericism, aggressiveness, and a striving for special effects. Steeped in the traditions of the vanguard and generally indifferent to canons of form and subject, the contents give the impression of literary sectarianism. The contributions range all the way from genuinely original work to those formal maneuvers and futile postures that seem inevitably to accompany all ventures in modernism. This sectarian tone, moreover, should be recognized as the natural atmosphere in which new aesthetic methods are evolved and perfected. For the past century, in fact, new movements in literature and art have constantly tended toward "secession" from the normal and rational, since the preservation and renewal of values seemed possible only through the withdrawal into self-defined ideals.

If, however, this issue of "New Directions" contains the usual quota of academic modernism, it is more than compensated for by a few pieces of a very high order and several others of at least an unusual interest. Blood Wedding, one of the best works of F. Garcia Lorca, the much-discussed Spanish poet, is here made available for the first time in translation. Marked by an almost classic normality and written with great strength, this "peasant tragedy" lays bare the fatalities of the primitive Spanish countryside. The selections from "The Tropic of Capricorn" by Henry Miller and "The Black Book" by Lawrence Durrell present two writers little known in this country—one an émigré from the United States, the other from England—who have been working new veins of fiction. And while I think the tributes to Miller's powers have been somewhat exaggerated—his self-indulgent ruminations about the meaning of things sound a little Saroyanesque—there is no denying the sweep of his rhetoric or the effects of abstract irony he is often able to achieve. Durrell, whose book has been described by T. S. Eliot as "the first piece of work by a new English writer to give me any hope for the future of prose fiction," seems to have contrived a method for weaving a pattern of moods and associations around essentially simple experiences, simply told.

To complete the citations: there are some meticulous sketches by William Carlos Williams, who never appears to be out of place in a collection of new trends; such abler younger writers as Dylan Thomas (a leading figure of the latest generation of British poets), John Berryman, Elizabeth Bishop, Richard Eberhart, Sherry Managan, and Kenneth Rexroth are rather well represented; and Harry Levin contributes a lengthy commentary on "Finnegans Wake" that is somewhat didactic in tone but quite clever and informative, raising some important critical problems. In addition, many of the Greenberg MSS left behind by that untutored young poet, whose influence on Hart Crane has recently been discovered, are published in their original form. The products of a highly romantic and obsessive but almost completely undisciplined imagination, these poems provide a remarkable opportunity for a study of the sources of talent. And a section of the volume is devoted to a discussion, with illustrations, of New Directions in Design.

As an index of the state of American letters "New Directions" reveals that, after the flush of the thirties, a new mood of social indifference and ennui has seized writers. Instead of the large human structures with which literature was concerned but a few years ago, the subjects of most of the younger writers today are limited to some corner or gradation of experience. And the absence of literary schools and group programs would seem to indicate an atomization that has thrown the individual writer back upon himself. In the discipline of his craft he has apparently found—at least for the moment—an escape from the easy salvation of politics.

WILLIAM PHILLIPS

Hitler's Weakest Link

FROM NAZI SOURCES. By Fritz Sternberg. Alliance Book Corporation. $1.75.

AFTER the close of the First World War Sir William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff during some of its most critical periods, estimated that only 25 per cent of the national effort had been exerted by the soldiers and sailors. Today the percentage would be less even if armies and navies were using their maximum strength. Dr. Sternberg agrees, takes as his text the judgment of the Chief of the German Economic General Staff that "the economic strength of the nation is of decisive importance for the outcome of the war," and proceeds to demonstrate that by this test Germany must lose.

He uses Nazi sources—statements of Nazi officials, soldiers, and economists. A book largely plagiarized from Dr. Sternberg's work was published in Budapest last summer and sold thousands of copies. The Germans became so alarmed that

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"they ordered the Hungarian government to confiscate it," although they could not point out any errors. Outside Hungary the revelations caused less excitement because they were more familiar. Other books and magazine discussions had analyzed in considerable detail German shortages in fats, steel, oil, foodstuffs, and other raw materials.

For one reader, the attractiveness of the presentation and the persuasiveness of the argument are not increased by pictographs which might well be called *Kindergraphs*—that is, pictorial translations or rather loose paraphrases of statistics. Why for healthy prose interspersed with pertinent figures should authors substitute pictures which are frequently puzzling and sometimes misleading? I had rather be told something about the coal and iron production of the Allies and the Central Powers in 1914 and not have to count symbols apparently representing ingots but looking like coffins. Little piles of bank notes represent wages; smokestacks, factories, some of them capped by helmets with swastiskas on them to show war production; and black figures, workers, who look at first as if they had guns over their shoulders rather than shovels. Every schoolboy knows that Germany had much more food in 1913 than in 1918, but he must be very young indeed to need to learn it by estimating the shrinkage of loaves of bread, legs of lamb, and pats of butter. In the last case, apparently, the plate shrank even more than the butter.

Some years ago a volume was published entitled "Is the Navy Ready?" Based almost entirely on excerpts of the proceedings of the United States Naval Institute, it disclosed that many naval officers were asking questions concerning strategical concepts, marine architecture, and training and ability of personnel. American readers of that book hoped that the unreadiness of the navy had been grossly exaggerated. American readers of Dr. Sternberg's book will hope that he does not exaggerate and that, in the phrase of his subtitle, he has demonstrated "why Hitler can't win." But before Hitler is willing to agree, how much will have been lost by England, France, nearby neutrals, and even more remote neutrals?

LINDSAY ROGERS

Yesterday's Muckrakers

CRUSADERS FOR AMERICAN LIBERALISM. By Louis Filler. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

NEWSPAPER CRUSADERS: A NEGLECTED STORY. By Silas Bent. Whittlesey House. $3.

WHAT one finds in both these books is interesting and valuable documentation of the exploits of crusading magazines and newspapers, particularly during the Golden Age of muckraking—the decade that preceded the outbreak of the World War. What one misses is the chain of economic and social relationships, the full historical context, in which these exploits took place. Commercial magazine muckraking flourished once, is today no more, and so far as I am aware nobody except perhaps Mr. Filler thinks it can be revived. Why? Newspapers still conduct certain kinds of crusades but do not conduct certain other kinds. Why? What was the nature of the editor-reader relationship in the first decade of the century, and what is it now? What changed it? Where do we go from here, and what do we use for power?

Mr. Bent does not attempt to answer these questions, and Mr. Filler, when he broaches problems of theory or tactics, almost invariably becomes confused and rhetorical. One can't make Mark Sullivan a muckraker again just by reciting incantations before the shrine of "democracy" or by declaring, as does Mr. Filler, that in the thirties "Americans were ready for muckraking if muckraking was ready for them." Not only is there less give to Mr. Sullivan these days; there is also less give to the periodical publishing apparatus and other institutions of our capitalist democracy. They are both more "mature"—to use the word on which Mr. Filler concludes his exhortation.

One must quickly add, however, that Mr. Filler has obviously fallen in love with his material; that he has here exhumed, arranged, and exhibited large quantities of it with vast industry; that he has done belated justice to a number of underestimated writers, notably David Graham Phillips. The result is a book that even the surviving muckrakers will want to read.

What stands out in Mr. Filler's account, as in other studies of the period, is the sudden emergence of the phenomenon of magazine muckraking, its amazing spread and intensity, its equally sudden and almost complete collapse. Except for such isolated portents as Henry Demarest Lloyd's "Wealth and Commonwealth" and Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward," the gay—and violent—nineties were without benefit of magazine muckraking. But starting in 1901 and 1902, with priority disputed among Lincoln Steffens, Mark Sullivan, and Ray Stannard Baker, and among *McClure's, Collier's Weekly,* and the *Atlantic Monthly* as publishing mediums, the muckraking movement spread like a forest fire and was soon devouring three-quarters of the wood pulp that went into the magazines. By 1910 a dozen muckraking periodicals, each with circulations of 300,000 and upward, were running full blast, with a score of lesser sheets competing in the same market. But by 1916 there was nothing left except a pulp-paper *Pearson's,* rapidly expiring in the hands of the raffish Frank Harris. Big business dispatched the muckraking magazines either by cutting off their credit or by "joining" them through the business office; the muckrakers found themselves without a market, and the war completed their demoralization.

Some of the muckrakers, like Charles Edward Russell, Upton Sinclair, Albert Bullard, and George Creel, were Socialists, and it was precisely they who herded the liberals—Ray Stannard Baker, Samuel Hopkins Adams, Ida Tarbell, Will and Wallace Irwin, Ernest Poole, Harvey O'Higgins—into the propaganda apparatus for the war. Here a certain contemporary parallelism is apparent, although Mr. Filler fails to note it. The muckrakers of the nineteen hundreds acquired a big following, accomplished many reforms, and at their peak were dressed up with a good deal of power. But they didn't know where to go or what to do; so it was Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, it's off to war we go. Today it would seem that candidates for president of the vigilantes in the American League of Artists and Authors for Patriotic Services (Herman Hagedorn in the last war) and for chairman of the Committee on Public Information (George Creel) are already almost visibly standing in line.

Mr. Bent's volume will contribute usefully to a realistic

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appraisal of both the potentialities and the limitations of our "free press." He has no difficulty in showing that crusades are still to a degree the routine business of newspaperdom, and that while most of them are aimed at increasing circulation and hence profits, some of them have apparently been conducted just because some newspaper editor or publisher got mad, or stubborn, and decided to lose his shirt. While everybody will be relieved to learn that the Chicago *Tribune* has had its moments of virtue, this reviewer is pleased to see Mr. Bent, loyal newspaperman though he is, handling without gloves even such institutions as the New York *Times*. He also notes that "from quack medicines and utility rapacities the poor man is now being saved, to some extent at least, by the Federal Trade Commission, not the newspapers." The volume contains a particularly interesting section on the role of the press in Colonial and Revolutionary times.

JAMES RORTY

France in Twilight

FRANCE AND MUNICH: BEFORE AND AFTER THE SURRENDER. By Alexander Werth. Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

MUNICH was the deadline, and the Western world missed it. If it is not to be too late now to retrieve the error, one must begin by understanding what happened. Since September 3 the pattern has become much clearer. For one thing we see now that the French lost far more than their Little Maginot Line when Hitler took the Czech fortifications at Munich. They lost what Georges Duhamel is quoted in this book as having called their Descartes Line. France abdicated the throne of spiritual authority it had held for so long. It is some, but small, comfort to know that this is a throne the Pretender across the Rhine can never occupy.

How did it happen? Was it because the French, like the Chinese, value life too much? For if the Japanese are the Prussians of Asia, France is the China of Europe. Like the Chinese the French honor reason, value life, and are the makers and lovers of beautiful things—silks and stone cathedrals, paintings and porcelains. Both are now set upon by the others, the warrior-mystics, the ones to whom embattled death for the Fatherland is the highest achievement. But no people for whom death is more than life can conquer the living.

Or was it because this people, once the light and life of Europe, let their lamp go out through sheer inertia born of twenty years of frustration of every generous instinct?

Mr. Werth tells the story of the abdication and its aftermath in France—from Delbos's visit to Prague in December, 1937, to Hitler's entry into Prague in March, 1939. Having been for the last ten years Manchester *Guardian* correspondent in Paris, he is well qualified to tell it, as readers of his last two books on French politics will know.

What emerges from his story is the degree of France's passive responsibility for the sorry events that made today's war of false fronts inevitable. The peace was not lost in Moscow last August. It was lost in London in July, 1936, when M. Blum conversed of Proust with Mr. Eden and came home to find himself announcing the thing called non-intervention. Subsequent French surrenders were also contrived by Whitehall, working with the assistance of the French appeasers on the weaknesses of the Popular Front government. It is no minimizing of Whitehall's role to say that weakness can be as culpable as the misuse of strength.

In Mr. Werth's record of the facts we can see how surrender bred surrender because the consequences of one imposed the necessity of the next. We see on the one hand Daladier, unable to make up his mind for any length of time, and on the other Bonnet, grimly determined to give in. We watch the growth of the appeasement spirit in France to a climax in the incredible rancor of the remark made by a reporter from the rightist *Jour* on the day of Hitler's Nürnberg speech: *"La Tchecoslovaquie—on s'en fout éperdument. Benes—il nous emmerde."*

Led and articulated by Flandin from outside the government and implemented by Bonnet from inside, appeasement ate away the underpinnings of French policy until one day it collapsed, and one saw that only sawdust had been holding it up. In those weeks anyone who took a "firm" line, anyone who talked about treaty obligations, anyone who referred to the danger of giving up the "Bohemian bastion," and certainly anyone who mentioned Czech democracy, was a *belliciste*, a warmonger.

It was this atmosphere, contrived and fostered by certain groups, which so weakened French resolve that the initiative was left to Mr. Chamberlain—Mr. Chamberlain whose amateurishness and what Mr. Werth calls "fundamental provincialism" have produced the worst mishandling of British foreign policy since Lord North lost the American colonies. Of all places, Prague was the last where France should have abandoned the initiative. The Little Entente, of which Czechoslovakia was the middle pillar, was a French creation; it was their bailiwick. That they resigned Czechoslovakia's fate into the hands of others was a measure of their irresolution. But racked by internal troubles—in which, through the perennial problem of the franc, Britain too had a hand—and having already resigned the initiative to London in the Spanish war, France could not summon the strength to get it back. For too long, protesting faintly at every other step, Paris had tagged along behind London. Although Mr. Werth fails to point this out, at least explicitly, the loss of the initiative in Czechoslovakia was of a piece with its loss in Spain. France could not get it back—did not want it back.

This was at the bottom of Daladier's irresolution. He did not, says Mr. Werth, "at heart desire Munich"; he allowed it "in spite of himself." Therein he differed from Mr. Chamberlain, who wanted Munich, who approved of Munich, who believed in Munich, and who was consequently to be the more deceived.

Inserted almost parenthetically, a three-page chapter called The Neglect of Russia has taken on added significance since this book was written. No one still wrestling in his mind over Soviet policy—and who is not?—should miss it.

In Munich's wake came the vote of plenary powers, the fiasco of the general strike, the hounding of the Communists and others as "warmongers" (it is odd to think of them now being hounded as pacifists), and above all the breaking up of the Front Populaire. In the vote on Munich and on the plenary powers the three parties of the Front Populaire finally split and thus was achieved what had been the aim of the

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"other" France ever since Blum came to power in 1936. This, not Munich, was the real goal and triumph of the appeasers. And this, together with Pertinax's dictum that "France had retroactively lost the World War at Munich," was the real meaning of the September crisis for the French Republic.

Happily Mr. Werth has given some light relief in a book that makes bitter reading. He has included his dispatches to the Manchester *Guardian* during the British royal visit to Paris in July, 1938. To one who, like the reviewer, opened the *Guardian* avidly every morning in London to turn to the Paris date line from "Our Own Correspondent," these dispatches, colorful as the Gobelin tapestries hung in the little Bois de Boulogne station where Their Majesties alighted, are a joy to reread. Those reading them for the first time will find that Mr. Werth combines an eye for every detail of personality and incident with a deep appreciation of the French people and their peculiar genius.

It is the France of the royal visit that one hopes to see live again. But so long as the Flandins and the Bonnets remain to run again another day, that France will have to wait.

BARBARA WERTHEIM

DRAMA

"Key Largo"

"KEY LARGO," Maxwell Anderson's new play at the Ethel Barrymore Theater, belongs among the most ambitious of his works. Like "Winterset," which it resembles in several important respects, it dispenses with the rather easy romanticism which contributed largely to the popularity of several of his most successful tragedies, and, again like "Winterset," it seeks instead to explore the deepest significance underlying a contemporary situation. Inevitably judgments of its worth will vary as widely as they have in the case of Mr. Anderson's other more pretentious plays, and under the circumstances it does not become a critic to play too safe. Despite certain weaknesses which are clear enough, "Key Largo" seems to me an impressive play which reestablishes its author's claim to be considered among the most arresting of contemporary writers.

No one, I presume, is likely to question the importance or the largeness of the theme. The drama begins with a prologue at a lonely outpost in Spain held by four American volunteers who had come to fight for their ideals. Their cause is plainly lost, not only because complete military defeat is inevitable, but also because all four have come to realize that even victory for the Loyalists would mean a good deal less than full victory for democracy and freedom. One of the four saves his own skin by deserting, arguing that under the circumstances any other course of action would be the most futile of quixoticisms, and that no man is called upon to sacrifice his life to a hopeless cause in which he no longer even believes. The play proper is concerned with his efforts, back home in America, to justify himself before the bar of his own conscience, to discover why he is still oppressed by a sense of guilt despite the fact that his reason still tells him that no cause would have been served by his death in Spain. When one has lost all faiths, nothing remains except the religion of self-preservation, but there are many who cannot emotionally accept the conclusions which to their intellects seem ineluctable. What, then, is the meaning of this emotional protest? Is it merely the consequence of an emotional lag, a sort of racial adolescence, part of the growing pains of the human race, and hence destined to disappear as completely as the sense of guilt which our ancestors felt when they first broke some now meaningless taboo? Or does it mean that honor and faith and decency and heroism do mean something, despite the fact that their sanctions are not discoverable in nature and their function not definable by the intellect.

No contemporary problem is more fundamental than the one which can be stated in these general terms, nor, I think, is any more suited to dramatic treatment, since what is required for its most effective statement is not a pseudo-answer in terms of a formulated creed but an exploration in terms of emotional effects; and this is exactly what Mr. Anderson has striven for. As in "Winterset," the moment chosen is not the moment when the choice which starts the train of events is made but the epoch during which the consequences of that choice are becoming fully apparent. The hero, like one of the principal characters in "Winterset," is a sort of Orestes in search of absolution. In both cases the result of this method is to make possible a brooding intensity which a mere presentation of the original events themselves could not have achieved. At the same time it must be admitted that the defects of the two plays are equally similar. For one thing, certain of the long speeches —notably that of the blind man near the end of the present play—fail so signally to reach what they aim at as to produce an effect perilously close to bathos. For another, some of the action which keeps the play going and finally brings it to a factitious rather than to an inevitable or very significant conclusion seems arbitrary and melodramatic. And in both cases these defects would probably seem even more serious than they seemed to spectators were it not for the fact that both plays were admirably produced and acted. In the present case all the parts, including the second most important, which is taken by Uta Hagen, are excellently performed, and Paul Muni's interpretation of the central character is highly distinguished. The part is written almost in monotone, for it is one long plea for self-justification, and Mr. Muni plays it without any attempt to provide contrasts which are not there. But for all his restraint he plays with subtly placed accents which keep the character movingly alive.

I have more than once expressed the opinion that to say of an artist only that he has chosen an important subject and means well is to say nothing. Some positive achievement is necessary, and the requirement applies to Mr. Anderson as well as to anyone else. But to say that a play is not perfect, to say that the full greatness of a great theme has not been revealed, is quite a different matter. For all its shortcomings—and they are shortcomings characteristic and persistent in Mr. Anderson's work—"Key Largo" does not fail. It chooses a great theme, and it makes something out of that

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great theme. To me the achievement is at least as evident as the shortcomings, and the work worth anyone's attention.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"The Mikado" has gone "hot" and "red"; now Shakespeare, after a turn at being "modern," has gone jitterbug. There is a dream, to be sure, in "Swingin' the Dream" (Center Theater), and a hilarious version of Pyramus and Thisbe, but there is much more of mad dancing in a forest near New Orleans, and superb Benny Goodman. The décor is fresh and bright, and Maxine Sullivan, Louis Armstrong, and Butterfly McQuade—who is a delightful Puck—carry the affair through with a charm peculiarly their own. Forget Shakespeare and you can enjoy a lively, lavish swing show. M. G. S.

ART

Picasso: Painter of the Year

THE painter of the year is Picasso. Not only because the crowds choke every room at the Modern Museum—where his show is current until January 7—or because the society pages rave, or because children and grown-ups and professors and young business men and tidy old ladies and even casual passers-by come in and argue and laugh and accept and praise and wonder. Not for any one of these reasons, or for all together. But because Picasso is indisputably a force in the world of today, is working his way courageously forward amid the terrors and indignities of our time, and is holding a lamp that penetrates into the most fearsome corners of the contemporary scene. Not all the visitors will realize this, of course. For his Guernica, that supreme glory of his life and this show, will not be "seen" yet. But most of them sense an independence, a daring, an imagination that are welcome to them as Americans.

This quality of innovation is evident in Picasso's very earliest work. He came to Paris a lad still in his teens. He fell in love with its movement and vivacity. And if he saw the Moulin de la Galette as Renoir did, and dancers as Toulouse-Lautrec, and the poor as Steinlen, he also registered a steely delight that was his own and a vivid compassion that was as troubling as it was unique. Then suddenly he forgot his influences and did his On the Upper Deck as if structural painting had been habitual to him for many years.

But life was hard. He had to shuttle to and from Spain. He lived in poverty. Beggars reminded him of his native land—or perhaps of El Greco; he saw clowns evicted; sensitive youngsters looked underfed and babies wiser than their poet-parents. These hardships, so clearly reflected in his work throughout his so-called Blue Period, continued until about 1905. Then he began to sell. For this reason, perhaps, but also because he was living in different light conditions and expanding his own means as a painter, he entered what is somewhat too schematically called his Rose Period. Forms were larger, softer, rounder; he caressed more and suffered less. He painted an unforgettable portrait of Gertrude Stein (1906), and then late in the year began a crucial canvas, Les Demoiselles d'Avignon.

It was occasioned in part by his detonating collision with the African Negro art which he had discovered only a short time before. Under its impact Picasso sought a rawer, fiercer, more elemental attack upon painting, and particularly upon the realization of forms in space. No doubt the canvases of Cézanne, then first achieving recognition, influenced him in this. In any case, he had now embarked on cubism. And it was now that, along with Braque and Apollinaire, the poet, and other ardent friends of his, he really entered the main stream of the moderns. Or rather, directed it into his own channel. For from this time forth no painter could disregard Picasso. Cubism continued, and he analyzed forms until he found the structure underneath; then he broke this down, eliminated even color, and sought to construct with unattached angles and rhythms and balances. Some have considered this period—roughly 1907 to 1913—the purest one in Picasso's painting. Certainly it is one of the most stimulating.

The war was an interruption. He continued with his *collages,* some of which seem like cafe jokes, while others remind us that he was exploiting new materials just as contractors were in building, and that, being sensitive to his external environment, he was merely duplicating it on the canvas. In 1917 he journeyed to Italy, where he made contact with the Russian Ballet. His so-called neo-classicism followed. Inspired by Ingres, but no less by the regular features of his Russian wife and by a new, spare, and at times almost reactionary art spirit which sought an anchorage in the past, he produced a whole series of elegant and incredibly accomplished drawings. This neo-classical tendency, fully illustrated by ballet curtains, costume designs, and pen portraits, as well as by many of the paintings which make up the 362 items in the show, alternated with his Cubist efforts. The latter terminated with the shivery Three Musicians of 1923, one of those summations which Picasso periodically produces.

In the next ten years he painted some large and handsome still-lifes—in particular The Fish Net, which has an eerie quality akin to sympathetic black magic—and a whole series of frenetic and sometimes bonelike dancing figures. In 1930 he depicted a squeezed, pared, and taut Crucifixion, which with a Burial of many years earlier was a predecessor to the mighty resolutions of his current phase. He also broke up forms, flung them one against the other, and at times seemed to be on the point of disintegration.

After his Goya-like Minotauromachy, an etching of 1935, he produced almost nothing for approximately two years. The Spanish War roused him again. He satirized Franco in a series of etchings. Then, after the bombing of Guernica, he engaged to do a mural on the subject for the Madrid government. Painted entirely in black and white, with an intermediary of gray, this huge work, which stands in a temple-like space on the third floor, cries out the very agony of those years. Everything is shattered in it—persons, horses, birds, bull, vegetation, tools and weapons, buildings—everything, that is, but the lamp of truth. This, held by the still intact hand of an indestructible humanity, lights the scene for the future to see.

The paintings which follow—Girl with a Cock, a pair of roosters, and a series of remarkable "stitched" portraits, like murdered Van Goghs—have a power and richness of color never equaled by Picasso before. Here, indeed, he is the spirit of the world in this hour—and the promise that the eye which

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Upton Sinclair Has a Dream

THIRTY-SEVEN years have passed since I began writing in the cause of Social Justice. When I began, our country had a Socialist paper with a circulation of 600,000. Today the name of "Socialist" has been stolen by the Nazis, and our cause is mocked by the vileness of Anti-Semitism. Stop and realize that "Father" Coughlin's sheet called "Social Justice" is now going out to one million Americans every week!

We intellectuals, liberals and progressives, don't know what the American people are. We stand on a little island, surrounded by superstition and hate, and the tide is rising. We seek refuge in ivory towers, castles in Spain—and remember what came to the intellectuals of Spain!

In the course of thirty-seven years I have published sixty-five books and pamphlets, and have tried to get mass circulation for them in my own country. For the most part I have failed. Only once or twice in those years have I been free from debt, because the only way to get books to the poor was to give them. Books couldn't and can't be sold in competition with Hearst, McCormick, Macfadden, Curtis, and the rest.

My books are read abroad. A bibliography (1938) shows 772 different translations, in 47 languages and 39 countries. My mail is full of letters testifying that all over the world the masses have learned from my books what is really going on in America. But how often in our own country do movies, radios, newspapers, or magazines give real facts about our ignorant, starved, and tormented masses?

Only in scattered cases does a library buy a book of Upton Sinclair. I know cases of fifty reservations for one volume; and of course they are soon worn out. But libraries will accept gifts of my books. I tried it recently with three hundred cloth copies of *The Flivver King,* and none was rejected.

Here is a dream which has haunted my life for many years. Somehow, sometime, from a best seller or a movie, I would get a large sum of money, and print an edition of ten or twelve volumes of my works with special stout bindings, and present a set to the libraries of every college and university in the United States, and to public libraries of cities and towns, and branch libraries in the large cities. They are printing thick volumes nowadays, and using the old plates you can put a lot into ten volumes; novels like *Boston, Oil, The Jungle, Co-Op, The Flivver King, Little Steel;* social studies such as *The Profits of Religion, The Brass Check, The Goose-Step;* the anthology, *The Cry for Justice;* critical works, *Mammonart* and *Money Writes;* plays such as *Singing Jailbirds* and *Hell;* also several pamphlets in which the average American will find his own problems discussed in his own language.

An edition of ten thousand sets would mean 100,000 books placed where the people could find them. I have examined many library copies of my books, and find that they go out about once a week. That would mean that in one year 5,000,000 persons would read a book which gave them the truth they need. Such is my dream.

It could be done for about $25,000. I have tried many times to earn it, but have failed. Now, being sixty-one, I am not likely to succeed. I have talked to rich people about it, but I have never had the fortune to encounter one who had that much social vision. They want to be entertained; they want you to come to tea-parties—and I am writing a long novel about Europe.

Today I found myself a few hundred dollars ahead, and in a world of wholesale starvation and misery I am not happy with money in the bank. I decided to spend it to put this question publicly: Is there, anywhere in the whole United States, a person of wealth who can judge the social value of books; who really wants to fight Fascism and Anti-Semitism with sound ideas of Social Justice?

Please understand, I don't want to touch any money. The plates are stored with a big printing concern. I will give my authorization free of charge; the donor may order the edition, and the books be mailed directly to libraries by the printer. My wife and I don't spend two thousand a year on our personal needs, and I can earn more than that. All I want is readers. In return I offer you the gratitude of 5,000,000 persons; and I will dedicate the edition to the donor.

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Merry Christmas to you, and enjoy it, for your next one may be less so.

UPTON SINCLAIR

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sees will not fail. This magnificent exhibition must be seen to be appreciated. All praise to the museum for a magnificent show, and to the public for a response which seems to show an awareness that Picasso has cut to the very core of our time.

Georges Schreiber has been doing a good job of acclimatizing himself to the American scene. Indeed, in his current show at the Associated Americans Artists' (through December 9) this European, now naturalized, has surpassed some of the native-born artists who have so vociferously been publicizing their efforts to "paint American." Wheat fields, Florida beaches, plantation scenes, and the long gray road before the tourist—all these he has seen and brought back with him from an extended automobile trip which took him through twenty-seven states. His reports on them are contained in ten oils and thirty-four water-colors.

He scores this time with his oils. At least half of them are distinctly personal versions of the land and its people, and two among these are something more. In the first, In Mississippi, our new citizen follows a load of hay with a quickening humor which seems to spring from the landscape itself. In the second, Farmer and Raincloud, he has tellingly caught the farmer just before the skies open up. Two moods prevail in the water-colors. The more successful show people doing something to the land; the others, when occasioned by excitement or agitation, seem overemphatic. Mr. Schreiber is at his best painting the simpler activities. Then his fresh European eye sees something that the Currys and Woods do not. All of which would indicate that, if patriotism is as patriotism does, then Mr. Schreiber is a better American than his more advertised compeers.

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Mozart: "The Magic Flute"; Beecham; $27.75. Overture to "The Magic Flute"; Toscanini; $2. Symphony K. 551 ("Jupiter"); Walter; $5.75.

Mussorgsky: Closing scene from "Boris Godunov"; Chaliapin; $2.

Schubert: Posthumous Sonata in A; Schnabel; $9. Ballet Nos. 1 and 2 from "Rosamunde"; Walter; $1.50.

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Strauss: "Traum durch die Dämmerung" and "Die Nacht"; Janssen; $1.50.

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COLUMBIA

Bach: Organ Toccata and Fugue in D minor; Commette; $1.50. Organ Chorale-Prelude, "Komm' Gott, Schöpfer"; Commette; $1.

Beethoven: Sonata Opus 53 ("Waldstein"); Gieseking; $5. Sonata Opus 57 ("Appassionata"); Gieseking; $5. Violin Sonata Opus 30 No. 3; Milstein and Balsam; $3.50. Overture to "Fidelio"; Weingartner; $1.50.

Bloch: Violin Concerto; Szigeti; $6.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Haydn; Weingartner; $3.50. Variations on a Theme of Handel; Petri; $5. Symphony No. 3; Weingartner; $6.

Debussy: "L'après-midi d'un faune"; Beecham; $1.50. "Nuages" and "Fêtes"; Inghelbrecht; $3 (two records from set of Three Nocturnes).

Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 5; Weingartner; $3.50.

Mozart: Symphony K. 297 ("Paris"); Beecham; $5. String Quartet K. 387; Roth Quartet (technically finished but lifeless performance); $5. Piano Concerto K. 491; Casadesus; $6.

Purcell: Fantasia; Pasquier Trio; $1.50.

Scarlatti: Sonatas for harpsichord; Casadesus (playing them on the piano with suavity instead of sparkle); $5.

GAMUT

Bach: Sonata No. 3 for violin and clavier; Schwarz and Ehlers (violin recorded a little shrill; surfaces poor); $3 (two records from Set 7).

Mozart: Fantasia K. 475; Webster Aitken (recording imperfect; surfaces poor); $1.50.

Schubert: Posthumous Sonata in C minor; Webster Aitken (performance a little feverish; surfaces poor); $5.

MUSICRAFT

Schumann: "Davidsbündlertänze"; Kurt Appelbaum; $5.

DECCA

Schubert: Sung by Lehmann: "Geheimes" and "Der Tod und das Mädchen" ($.50); "An die Musik" and "Du bist die Ruh'" ($.75); "Auf dem Wasser zu singen" ($.75).

Schumann: Sung by Lehmann: "Du bist wie eine Blume" and "Widmung" ($.50); "Marienwürmchen" ($.50). Sung by Tauber: "Mondnacht" and "Ich hab' im Traum geweinet" ($.50); "Der Nussbaum" and three songs from "Dichterliebe" ($.50); "Ich sende einen Gruss" and "Widmung" ($.50).

Strauss: Sung by Lehmann: "Ständchen" and "Traum durch die Dämmerung" ($.50).

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Kirby Orchestra: "Undecided" (Decca 2216); "It Feels Good" (Vocalion 4624).
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Kansas City Five: "Good Mornin' Blues" (Commodore 511); "I Want a Little Girl" (Commodore 509).
Basie Orchestra: "If I Could Be with You" (Vocalion 4748).
Hampton Orchestra: "Sweethearts on Parade" (Victor 26209).
Goodman Orchestra: "My Honey's Lovin' Arms" (Victor 26095).
Jess Stacy: "Complainin' " (Commodore 506).
Billie Holiday: "I Wish I Had You" (Vocalion 4238); "The Very Thought of You" (Vocalion 4457); "Fine and Mellow" (Commodore 526).
Frankie Newton: "The Blues My Baby Gave to Me" (Bluebird 10216).
Coleman Hawkins: "Crazy Rhythm" (Victor 26219); "Dee Blues" (Commodore reissue 53-54); "Heartbreak Blues" (Commodore reissue 55-56).
Ellington Orchestra: "Jitterbug's Lullaby" (Vocalion 4309); "Saratoga Swing" (Bluebird reissue 10245; "No, Papa, No" (Victor reissue 26310).
Louis Armstrong: "Savoy Blues (Decca 2538); "Potato Head Blues" and "Put 'em Down Blues" (Commodore reissue 59-60).
Maxine Sullivan: "I Dream of Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair" (Victor 26260).

(Bluebird, Decca, Vocalion, 35 cents; Victor 75 cents; Commodore $1.)

FILMS

"WE ARE NOT ALONE," starring Paul Muni (Warner Brothers), is the most interesting of the recent films. But it is interesting, I am sorry to say, for its faults rather than for its virtues—faults in the subject matter, in Muni's acting, and, more important, in the whole conception, which reveals clearly the compromises and hence inadequacy of the Great Industry when it concerns itself with psychological problems. The bitter fact is that even such an honest attempt as this results in nothing more than ambitious phoniness. I assume that the rave notices the picture received were merely the expression in reverse of the suppressed disgust of reviewers with the normal run of pictures which they have to take seriously. But their understandable reaction does not make "We Are Not Alone" as good as they say it is.

The whole picture, though its plot is involved, hard-worked, and full of melodramatic contrivances, depends on the character of a middle-aged doctor in a small English town. The doctor is devoted to his profession, has modern ideas, a heart of gold, and little temperament. He has also a humorless wife, petty and ugly, and a nervous little boy who is the victim of his mother's misunderstanding and constant nagging. It is a dreary household, yet we are asked to believe that its master has a great sense of beauty and love of nature.

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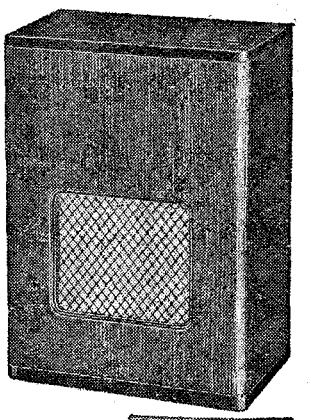

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"There is nothing I can do," he says, but he is not convincing. Then the girl enters, a dancer with a broken wrist. She is an Austrian, very shy but bold enough to have run away from school and got into Russia with a false passport in order to study dancing. How she comes to England remains a mystery. She does not look like a dancer in cheap halls; for that matter she doesn't look like a dancer at all. She looks like a nurse and becomes one in the doctor's household until she is dismissed by the doctor's wife when her unhappy but innocent past is revealed. The doctor objects to the dismissal. The wife takes the child out of the house. But the child sneaks back and manages to break a bottle of pills; he collects the pills from the floor and puts them into a different bottle. You're right. The doctor's wife takes the wrong pills and dies. At this moment a second film starts. The war breaks out—it is 1914—and stores with German names are demolished; the doctor gets worried about the Austrian girl and persuades her to leave. He takes her on his bicycle to the station, where they are both arrested. Soon they are put on trial, accused of murder. When on the witness stand the doctor is asked whether he loves the girl, he answers to his own astonishment, "Yes, I do, but I never thought of it." They are condemned to be hanged, and for those of us who have often complained about artificial happy endings here for a change is an artificial unhappy one—the sentence is carried out. Outside the movies the finger-prints of the child on the bottle would have saved the innocents.

There are many convincing details in Paul Muni's performance. The surface of the part—the doctor's movements, the way he walks, eats, talks—is perfect. But Muni only *shows* a person; he does not impress us with a character. This man learns nothing, suffers nothing, changes not at all; he behaves in the last scene as in the first. If there is a fine point in that I missed it. If one had suspected that Muni in his ambitious biographical parts was smothered by make-up and the desire to be as like the original as possible, here he had a chance to create a character freely. He failed.

"Destry Rides Again" (Universal), the comeback picture of Marlene Dietrich, is a western, with all the tumult and the shooting. Marlene Dietrich plays a dance-hall girl, a variation of her role in her first international success, "The Blue Angel." She proves, with her "allure," her husky singing voice, and precise acting, that she is far from passé—not even in a type of part which, to her praise be it said, she has outgrown. I hope to see her soon again in a picture more worthy of her talents. James Stewart of "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" plays a simple, shrewd sheriff who does not like to carry pistols, and again wins every heart.

"The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex" (Warner Brothers) is a profound disappointment. Maxwell Anderson's stage play has been photographed in technicolor with a handsome wooden horse as Essex (Errol Flynn); Bette Davis overplays the queen in a grand manner, but nothing can move this Essex. Therefore the greater her passion for him the smaller the queen becomes. Miss Davis is best in her solo scenes; then her painful thoughts about her love are not made ridiculous by the presence of a stupid lover.

For thriller addicts: "The Cat and the Canary" (Paramount) is witty, fast, gruesome, and offers no insult to the average intelligence.

FRANZ HOELLERING

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Letters to the Editors

Do Germans Want Peace?

Dear Sirs: In a curious article glowing with generous admiration for German power and kindness, Mr. Villard, writing in *The Nation* of November 25, speaks of the desire of the German people for peace. In that the people are at one with Chancellor Hitler's many assurances of his own desire for peace. The question is only: What kind of peace? A super-Munich? The right to rule "inferior" races like Poles and Czechs? The Germans could have had peace—and could have let mankind have peace—if after the acquisition of Austria and the Sudetenland they had not marched into Prague and had not regarded the Poles as a *minderwertiges Volk.* There would be peace immediately if the Germans left Prague and learned to be more critical of themselves, their own virtues and character, than of the Poles.

HANS KOHN

Northampton, Mass., November 29

Control of Ideas

Dear Sirs: Max Lerner's proposal for "idea-control" in your issues of November 4 and November 11 poses a problem which is bound to be discussed with much metaphysical hair-splitting. The cornerstone of the liberal tradition has been that in the free and unhampered interplay of ideas the truth will ultimately triumph. Social responsibility, therefore, impels us to strive toward the establishment of a free intellectual atmosphere.

It was the eighteenth-century view that men are primarily rational creatures among whom there is a fairly equal distribution of common sense. This sense common to all enables man to distinguish good from evil and truth from falsehood. The opinion of the majority is usually truth because it is founded on common judgment.

But these concepts, embodied in our Constitution and exercising a vital function in the democratic process, have been subjected to shattering blows from three directions—Marx, Freud, and educational psychology. Studies in intelligence testing reveal the fact that there is no equal distribution of intelligence. Marx denied the existence of pure, disinterested ideas. Freud's "wishful-thinking process" shows the impossibility of divorcing the intellect from emotional conditioning.

It is becoming increasingly clear that social ideas are reflections of group interests. It is also evident, as responsiveness to modern advertising technique has shown, that erroneous ideas may be accepted as true. Ideas may be given the force of truth by the power of money, organized propaganda, the press, and the radio. The old ideal of establishing a free and open ground for the battle of ideas falls far short of expectations.

Whether it would be possible for the government to regulate ideas, as it is seeking to control wages and hours, prices, crops, and monopolies, without causing irreparable damage to our intellectual development is a debatable question.

SAMUEL SLEEPER

Worcester, Mass., November 28

Release Jean Giono!

Dear Sirs: Shortly after the war began, a group of thirty French intellectuals and trade-union leaders issued over their signatures a pamphlet denouncing the war. Among the signers were the well-known writers Jean Giono, author of the novel on which the prize-winning French film "Harvest" is based, Alain, and Victor Marguerite. Other signers included Lecoin, secretary of the Solidarité Internationale Antifasciste group; Georges Yvetot, former secretary of the General Federation of Labor (the C. G. T.); Vigne, secretary of the Miners' Union; Robert Laizon, editor of *La Révolution Prolétarienne;* and Marceau Pivert, secretary of the Workers' and Peasants' Socialist Party.

General Hering, the military governor of Paris, at once invoked against this group the decree law of September 1, 1939. This law forbids "all manifestations that might exercise an unfortunate influence on the morale of the army and the population."

Giono was arrested on September 16 and is now confined in the municipal prison of Digne, Basse-Alpes. Lecoin has also been arrested and is imprisoned at Angers. We do not know the fate of the other signers.

We wish to call your readers' attention to the following cablegram that was sent to Premier Daladier signed by thirty American artists and writers at the invitation of the League for Cultural Freedom and Socialism. "We protest imprisonment of Jean Giono and other signers of anti-war statement. Such repressive measures against writers and trade unionists guilty only of expressing opinions are incompatible with democracy. We demand release of Giono and others."

Perhaps some of your readers, too, will want to make their protest heard about this official persecution of men for their beliefs.

DWIGHT MACDONALD,
Executive Secretary, League for Cultural Freedom and Socialism

New York, November 29

Santo Domingo or Palestine

Dear Sirs: I read with interest your editorial entitled Mercy and Statesmanship in your issue of November 25 and am in complete accord with you when you heap praise on Santo Domingo, which is actually prepared to accept non-Aryan colonists. However, "the tardiness with which Jewish organizations took up its offer" is not to be wondered at. In the first place, the failure of Baron de Hirsch's Argentinian settlements at the end of the past century and the impossibility of colonization in such lands as Tanganyika and British Guiana are too fresh in the minds of our people. The second and more important reason why we look askance at these various offers is the fact that there is a country which is willing to throw wide open its doors to admit as many as a million refugees if it be allowed. That country is Palestine; yet not a word concerning Palestine was spoken in Washington during the recent Inter-Governmental Refugee Commission sessions.

ISIDORE STEIN

Brooklyn, N. Y., November 30

Defense of "Ham and Eggs"

Dear Sirs: As one of the minority who recently voted for "Ham and Eggs" in this state, I challenge your characterization of our economics as "spurious" and of our measure as a "fantasy."

Professor Irving Fisher commended such a stamp scrip as we proposed to use, and mentioned its successful use at various times by numerous municipali-

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ties both in Europe and America. Indeed, it was its very practicability that accounted for the bitter opposition of banking and other interests.

There seems to be some controversy among economists as to how far purchasing power is affected by volume of monetary currency and its rapidity of circulation. But economists have very generally ascribed the boom preceding 1929 and the following depression to monetary inflation and deflation. Here in California, with wages low and money scarce, there has been absurd talk of overproduction, and crops of oranges, potatoes, and other produce have been deliberately destroyed. It seems, therefore, that an increase in our circulating medium, both in bulk and rapidity of turnover, might have gone a long way to relieve the situation. I am strongly of the opinion that the advocates of retirement warrants in the shape of a stamp scrip had all the best of the argument.

But this particular battle was not decided by argument; the victory was bought by bankers, by chambers of commerce, and by reactionary influences that spent enormous sums of money to create a scare among the less intelligent part of our population—the part that is scared of all new ideas.

WILLIAM R. TYMMS

Whittier, Cal., November 27

Tax-Exempt Religion

Dear Sirs: I am moved to take exception to an incidental assertion in *The Nation* of November 18. It is to the effect that we in the United States are free of the church-state entanglement.

The government does not, indeed, favor any particular denomination, but deism as such receives state sanction through exemption of religious property from taxation. In this way a body of belief in the supernatural as a moral imperative is recognized and a pecuniary discrimination is made against the increasing number of secular-minded people. Even if there is nothing to do about it, the situation deserves to be seen in the clear.

ANNA B. BISHOP

White Plains, N. Y., December 1

Lazare and American Art

Dear Sirs: Christopher Lazare's review of the current Whitney Museum exhibition—in *The Nation* for November 18—is truthful, critical, and profound. It is profound because he has seen through the obsequiousness and cowardice of a well-wishing and overzealous public. Why all the palaver about the vitality of contemporary American art, especially that collection which happens to repose on the sacred walls of the Whitney Museum?

DE HIRSH MARGULES

New York, November 27

CONTRIBUTORS

KENNETH G. CRAWFORD, Washington correspondent of the New York *Post*, is the author of "The Pressure Boys: The Inside Story of Lobbying in America."

REINHOLD NIEBUHR has just returned from an extensive European visit. He had the honor of delivering the Gifford lectures at the University of Edinburgh.

WILLIAM PHILLIPS is an editor of the *Partisan Review*.

LINDSAY ROGERS is Burgess Professor of Public Law at Columbia University.

JAMES RORTY is the author of "Our Master's Voice: Advertising," and "American Medicine Mobilized."

BARBARA WERTHEIM contributed a study of the French press to *The Nation* last summer. She has published a book entitled "The Lost British Policy."

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